

**Decentralization in the Kyrgyz agricultural sector.  
An institutional analysis**

Dissertation  
zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades

Doctor rerum agriculturalarum

Eingereicht an der  
Lebenswissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

von  
M.Sc. Wibke Crewett

Präsident der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
Prof. Dr. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz

Dekan der Lebenswissenschaftlichen Fakultät der Humboldt-Universität zu  
Berlin  
Prof. Dr. Richard Lucius

Gutachter  
1. Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Konrad Hagedorn  
2. Jun.-Prof. Dr. Andrea Knierim

Datum der mündlichen Prüfung: 25.01.2015

# Contents

<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Contents .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Abbreviations.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1 Decentralization and agricultural service provision in post-socialist Kyrgyzstan: an institutional analysis .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Decentralization, institutional change and agricultural services.....	1
1.2 Decentralization in post-Soviet environments. The example of Kyrgyzstan .....	4
<b>2 Exploring decentralization.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 Exploring decentralization – a study framework.....	12
2.2.1 Actors .....	14
2.2.2 Power.....	16
2.2.3 Accountability .....	18
2.2.4 The literature on decentralization and agricultural services .....	20
2.2.5 Laws and regulations on decentralization .....	21
2.3 Governance reforms and decentralization .....	24
2.3.1 Actors involved in decentralization.....	30
2.3.2 Distribution of tasks and responsibilities as a result of decentralization.....	35
2.3.3 Accountability relationships among the different actor groups .....	50
2.4 Impact of decentralization on agricultural service provision in Kyrgyzstan .....	56
2.4.1 Agricultural reforms.....	57
2.4.2 Impact on agricultural service provision.....	58
2.5 Summary of findings .....	63

2.6	Conclusions and knowledge gaps .....	64
<b>3</b>	<b>Decentralization of agricultural service provision .....</b>	<b>69</b>
3.1	Kyrgyzstan – a case study for the decentralization of publicly provided agricultural services .....	69
3.2	The case studies.....	70
3.2.1	Case study selection.....	70
3.2.2	Socio-economic conditions.....	72
3.2.3	Agricultural production patterns .....	73
3.2.4	Constraints on agricultural production .....	75
3.3	Local governance.....	80
3.3.1	The municipality government .....	80
3.3.2	Local organizations and groups .....	80
3.3.3	Non-governmental Organizations .....	85
3.4	Power resources.....	88
3.4.1	Land rights allocated to municipality residents .....	88
3.4.2	Municipality-level budgets .....	89
3.4.3	Municipality property.....	89
3.4.4	Land redistribution fund.....	92
3.4.5	Pasture .....	93
3.5	Accountability .....	93
3.5.1	Local government – local state administration .....	93
3.5.2	Local government – donors .....	95
3.5.3	Local government – citizens .....	96
3.6	Decentralized service provision.....	97
3.6.1	The provision of agricultural services .....	97
3.6.2	Formal rules versus local practice.....	105
3.7	Service evaluation.....	106
3.8	Discussion and Conclusions.....	108
<b>4</b>	<b>Improving the sustainability of pasture use in Kyrgyzstan. The impact of pasture governance reforms on livestock migration .....</b>	<b>113</b>
4.1	Introduction.....	113

4.2	The debate on migration.....	114
4.3	Methods and case study selection .....	115
4.4	The first pasture reform approach: 1999-2009 .....	119
4.4.1	Working rules for pasture use and access since 2002 .....	119
4.4.2	The impact of administrative practices .....	120
4.5	The second reform approach: community-based management.....	122
<b>5</b>	<b>Introducing decentralized pasture governance in Kyrgyzstan.</b>	
	<b>Designing implementation rules.....</b>	<b>124</b>
5.1	Introduction.....	124
5.2	Theory and analytical framework .....	125
5.2.1	Levels of institutional analysis.....	125
5.2.2	Street-level bureaucrats as authorized decision maker.....	127
5.3	Method and case study selection.....	128
5.4	Exploring the multiple actor action situation for boundary rule design .....	131
5.4.1	Formal collective-choice boundary rules for Pasture Committee establishment in the new pasture law .....	131
5.4.2	Collective choice working rules designed by municipality administrations .....	131
5.4.3	The implementing agency as designer of collective-choice boundary rules .....	136
5.5	Collective choice working rules – routines designed by the implementing agencies’ Community Development Support Officers..	136
5.6	Drivers of institutional design .....	139
5.7	Discussion and conclusion .....	140
<b>6</b>	<b>Street Level Bureaucrats at work. A municipality-level institutional analysis of community-based natural resource management implementation practice in the pasture sector of Kyrgyzstan .....</b>	<b>143</b>
6.1	Introduction.....	143
6.2	Analytical framework .....	145
6.3	Material and methods.....	148
6.4	Results .....	156

6.4.1	Formal rules for implementing a pasture management reform .....	156
6.4.2	Governance structures and Street-level Bureaucrats at work .....	162
6.4.3	Outcomes of the information campaign.....	166
6.4.4	Working rules for resource user mobilization.....	168
6.4.5	Determinants of working rule design .....	171
6.5	Discussion and conclusions.....	172
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusions .....</b>	<b>176</b>
	<b>References .....</b>	<b>180</b>
	<b>Annex .....</b>	<b>191</b>

## List of Tables

Table 1-1: Structure of book.....	10
Table 2-1: Actors' roles in decentralization .....	15
Table 2-2: Framework for institutional analysis of decentralization .....	17
Table 2-3: Literature on decentralization in Kyrgyz Republic.....	20
Table 2-4: Major legal acts in transferring authority to the municipality level (1999-2009).....	25
Table 2-5: Authority for agricultural service domains according to Agrarian Policy Concept 2004 .....	38
Table 2-6: Transfer of formal decision power to municipality-level actors based on decentralization legislation (1990-2009).....	46
Table 2-7: Agricultural services allocated to government .....	65
Table 2-8: Agricultural services allocated to private sector.....	66
Table 2-9: Agricultural services allocated to the cooperative sector.....	67
Table 2-10: Agricultural services allocated to donors.....	68
Table 3-1: Case study selection criteria .....	71
Table 3-2: Case study municipalities .....	73
Table 3-3: Municipality mayor's perceptions of key obstacles to development .....	79
Table 3-4: Community-based organizations or groups per municipality .....	81
Table 3-5: Number and type of organizations and community-based groups in each of the study municipalities .....	83
Table 3-6: Service providers not organized in any form of community- based group .....	84
Table 3-7: Land share distribution per person.....	88
Table 3-8: Municipality budget (in Kyrgyz Som).....	89
Table 3-9: Availability and status of municipal property .....	91
Table 3-10: Local-level agricultural service provision.....	102
Table 3-11: Service users' service quality evaluation .....	107
Table 4-1: Case study data.....	116
Table 4-2: Coding examples for text segments from interview transcripts.....	117

Table 5-1: Using the grammar of institutions for the operationalization of analytical situations.....	128
Table 5-2: Study case characteristics.....	129
Table 5-3: Case study selection.....	130
Table 5-4: Phasing of implementation of new pasture law.....	134
Table 5-5: Boundary working rules designed by ARIS Community Officers, municipality administrations and local pastures user compared to prescriptions by government and the implementing agency .....	138
Table 6-1: Timing of events and study activities .....	151
Table 6-2: Case study selection criteria .....	153
Table 6-3: Number of policy implementation expert interviews.....	155
Table 6-4: Number of pasture user interviews.....	155
Table 6-5:Community-level information dissemination tasks extracted from implementation guideline document distributed to municipality administrations during roundtable talks by ARIS Community Officers.....	159
Table 6-6: Respondents' sources of CBNRM-related information .....	167
Table A-1: List of interview partners.....	194

## List of Figures

Figure 2-1: Relation between decentralization, accountability and discretion .....	18
Figure 2-2: Governance structure in Kyrgyzstan (2008) .....	32
Figure 2-3: Structure of the municipality government (aiyl okmotu) .....	33
Figure 2-4: Formal and informal governance structure .....	52
Figure 2-5: Accountability relationship .....	57
Figure 2-6: Desintegration of state and collective farms in Kyrgyz Republic (1991-1997) .....	59
Figure 3-1: Agricultural land use in percent (2008) .....	75
Figure 3-2: Heads of animals (2007) .....	76
Figure 3-3: Heads of animals per household (2007) .....	77
Figure 3-4: Size of Land Redistribution Fund and size of village-adjacent pasture area (ha)(2007) .....	78
Figure 3-5: Structure of municipality administration (Aiyl Okmotu) .....	80
Figure 3-6: Types of service provision organizations and groups in each study municipality based on group interviews .....	87
Figure 3-7: Source of municipality revenue (percent) (2008) .....	90
Figure 3-8: Size of Land Redistribution Fund (hectare) (2008) .....	92
Figure 5-1: Map of the Kyrgyz Republic .....	125
Figure 6-1: Analytical framework .....	150
Figure 6-2: Pasture law implementation actor constellation in Kyrgyzstan in 2009 .....	158
Figure A-1: Annual GDP growth in % 1990-2012 .....	191
Figure A-2: Sectoral contribution to GDP 1990-2012 .....	192
Figure A-3: GINI index 1990-2010 .....	193



## Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AO	Aiyl Okmotu (Kyrgyz: Municipality Government)
AK	Aiyl Kenesh (Kyrgyz: Municipality Council)
ARIS	Community and Development Agency
BMBF	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (German: Ministry for Education and Research)
CBNRM	Community-based Natural Resource Management
CDSO	Communtiy Development Support Officer
CBO	Community-based Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GKR	Government of the Kyrgyz Republic
KZS	Kyrgyz Som
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
IAD	Institutional Analysis and Development
IoS	Institutions of Sustainability
LARC	Legal Assistance to Rural Citizens
LIC	Local Investment Committee
LSA	Local State Administration
LSG	Local Self-government
MAWRPI	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry
n.d.	No date
n.p.	No page
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NRM	Natural resource management
NSC	National Statistics Committee
n/a	no information available
PUU	Pasture User Union
RAS	Rural Advisory Service
SAEP	State Agency for Environment Protection and Forestry
SLB	Street-level bureacrat
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VIC	Village Investment Committee
VIP	Village Investment Project
WUA	Water User Association



# **1 Decentralization and agricultural service provision in post-socialist Kyrgyzstan: an institutional analysis**

## **1.1 Decentralization, institutional change and agricultural services**

Agricultural infrastructure and agricultural services, such as agricultural extension, irrigation, the provision of basic agricultural inputs, and financial and property-related administrative services are key elements for fighting rural poverty. Particularly in developing countries, those key services are often provided either in insufficient quantities, poor quality and are, in addition, difficult to be accessed by the poor (World Bank 2003). In order to overcome service provision and service access problems international donor organizations have identified decentralization, frequently summarized as bringing decision making “closer to the people” (de la Vega-Leinert 2000; Kaiser et al. 2006; Khaleghian 2004; World Bank 2003), a helpful strategy to arrive at more efficient and pro-poor service provision (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006b; Brinkerhoff et al. 2007; Cheema and Rondinelli 2007; Cohen and Peterson 1996; Johnson 2001; Korten 1990; Olowu 2003; Pincus 2001; Smith 1997; Works 2002).

Since the 1940s (Cohen and Peterson 1996: 3) decentralization has evolved from describing power shifts within the governmental administrative apparatus (e.g. Smith 1985) to sharing power, authority and responsibility among governance institutions, civil society organizations and private economic actors (Cheema and Rondinelli 2007: 2). The many attempts to classify decentralization approaches are partly conflicting (e.g. Ribot 2002a; Rondinelli et al. 1983; Works 2002). However, three areas of decentralization are commonly distinguished: a) political or democratic decentralization as an “institutionalized form of the participatory approach” (Ribot 2002a) that shifts decision making power to non-governmental bodies; b) administrative decentralization referring to power transferred to local branches of the central government; and c) fiscal decentralization, which concerns the shift of resources and revenue-generating powers away from the central authority (Ribot 2002a). Based on these three, clearly partly overlapping, forms of decentralization, several subtypes are described, which lack any common definition (e.g., deconcentration, delegation, privatization, devolution, deregulation, or delocalization).<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples for the confusing use of terminology are different definitions of the terms “deconcentration”, “devolution” and “delegation” by Ribot (2002: iif) and Rondinelli et al. (1983: 13f). A drastic example of the many definitions of decentralization are summarized in a UNDP-background paper on decentralization (UNDP 1999) which lists 40 pages of

For the purpose of this text, I define decentralization as a shift of decision making authority, responsibility and resources from higher authorities to smaller administrative units, but also “between government and civil society” by means of “service co-production, partnerships, joint policy making and feedback mechanisms” (Brinkerhoff et al. 2007: 190-191).

As a general concept, decentralization has come to promote a variety of objectives, including increased administrative, procedural efficiency, distributional equity and deepening democracy (Ribot 2002a: 8f; see also Bardhan 2002: 186f; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006b; Crook and Sverrisson 2001a and O'Neill 2003). Often seen as a one-fits-all approach in order to fight economic and social problems, many developing countries have adopted decentralization as a guiding principle in national development strategies (Romeo 2003; Works 2002). In the agricultural sector, a wide range of service areas, including administrative services, have become subject to decentralization. Examples for such services are:

1. Input provision
2. Agricultural education including agricultural training and advice
3. Natural resource management including the planning and administration of irrigation, management of pastures and agricultural land
4. Agricultural marketing
5. Veterinary health care

In highly centralized countries, services decentralization programs or policy strategies seek to abolish the state's service delivery monopoly by introduction of private firms, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local governments as service providers. The assumption is that decentralized service provision leads to better and cheaper supply as decentralized provision is assumed to be more responsive to consumer needs and preferences and is associated with lower levels of rent-seeking and corruption (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006a; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006b; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006c; Brinkerhoff et al. 2007; Oakerson and Parks 1989; Ribot 2002a).

“[...] local decision makers have access to better information on local circumstances than central authorities, and they use this to tailor services and spending to local needs and preferences; the public provides input to local decision making processes and holds local decision makers accountable for their actions; and administrative autonomy

creates space for learning, innovation, community participation and the adaptation of public services to local circumstances” (Khaleghian 2004: 165).

Decentralization outcomes often fall behind expectations (Bardhan 2002). In many cases, corruption remains a major problem, when power is transferred to local levels and elite capture secures the benefits of decentralization often only for those close to the local power elite (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006b). There are also cases where decentralization has led to outcomes contradicting its objectives, such as increased instead of reduced central power (Khaleghian 2004), an increase in power of influential local groups (O'Neill 2003; Matsui 2005; Thomi 2000) or an imbalanced allocation of decentralization cost and benefits to the disadvantage of the poor (Cleaver 2005).

As described above, decentralization entails a set of assumptions about local decision making. Firstly, it is assumed that local decision makers possess better information on service user needs and expectations and also have the willingness, capacity and means to convert this knowledge into effective action. Secondly, local citizens are assumed to be willing and able to actively take part in decision making, either formally through elections or informally through other participatory processes. Thirdly, it is assumed that citizens can control their local representatives or local decision makers and have effective means to control and influence local decision making. These conditions are supposed to facilitate more targeted and cheaper provision of services and goods, given that corruption and wasteful use of local budgets is constrained by local control through active involvement of the citizens (Agrawal and Ribot 1999).

Decentralization critics emphasise that relevant preconditions tend to lack in many decentralization implementation settings. Among these are: a) a democratic political environment with strong central organizations and a functioning legal system, which supports effective accountability relations, control of capture and corruption and which motivates decision makers to serve citizens needs (Bardhan 2002; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006b; Smith 1997); b) citizens' and local decision makers' endowment with resources and knowledge – enabled, among others, by open media and adequate citizen education (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006b; Khaleghian 2004), stable local-central relationships as well as government support for the overall decentralization program (Crook and Sverrisson 2001b).

Decentralization of services as a one-size fits all paradigm is problematic because the different sub-transactions within service provision and production require adjusted and also mixed governance approaches (Saito 2000 and Lewis 1998 cited in Ribot 2002a: 10f; see also Fuhr 1999/2000). Hence, different types of services as well as different stages of service provision and production (e.g. service provision, financing, production, regulation and consumption) require different governance structures aligned to the specific sub-transaction. Decentralization might only be one among other governance structures that might serve best for a specific service transaction or sub-transaction.

"Thus to a large extent, the appropriate level of subsidiarity is an empirical question which will be a function of the size of a country, the number of levels of sub-national government, the resource endowments of the country and the particular characteristics of different goods and services. We should therefore anticipate a continuum of decentralisation with widely differing roles being played by various actors in different circumstances. This is also likely to be a dynamic process with the degree and extent of devolution and the relative role of different actors varying over time" (Smith 1997: 4-5).

## **1.2 Decentralization in post-Soviet environments. The example of Kyrgyzstan**

Particularly in transition countries with a Post-Soviet legacy and a tradition of highly centralized administrative and service provision organizations, decentralization has been considered among the key reform priorities in administration and the economy (Illner 2000; Jones Luong 2004). There are plenty of examples for decentralization of different public services such as education (Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe 2004 for Mongolia), electricity supply (Lampietti et al. 2007), health services (Bascieri and Falkingham 2006), fiscal decentralization (Jones Luong 2004 for Kazakhstan; Leschenko and Troschke 2006 for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; the IMF and World Bank 2006 for Kyrgyzstan) or privatization in the agricultural sector (e.g. Csáki and Tuck 2000; Csáki et al. 2000 and Mudahar 1998 for Eastern Europe and Central Asia). The outcomes of these reforms are in some of those transition countries very disappointing and some initially ambitious reforms have come to a halt. This is not a surprise as considerable problems with democratic decision making, and administrative proficiency (e.g. Babajanian et al. 2005; Collins 2002; Engval 2007; Goetz 2001; Libman 2008) which are necessary socio-political frame conditions for successful decentralization, already discussed in Section 1.1, remain to exist.

Like all former Soviet Republics, the Kyrgyz Republic experienced drastic economic, social and political changes during the early 1990s. During the Soviet period the economy was mainly directed towards the production of sheep meat, wool and hides for the entire Soviet market. Production was organized in the form of large-scale collective and state farms (Fitzherbert 2006). After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the subsequent independence of Kyrgyzstan in 1991, input and output markets were suddenly located in foreign countries, such as the independent Russian Federation but also other former Soviet Republics which had become independent. Fiscal transfers from the Central Soviet government, on which the Kyrgyz Soviet Republic had depended, were no longer provided. Both these factors resulted in a drastic decline of the productivity of the economy (Pomfret 2002; Pomfret 2006; Pomfret 2007). A bottom line was reached in 1994 when real GDP fell by about 20 percent (see Figure A-1 in the Annex)

The government, supported by international donor organizations, responded with a decentralization program which is considered the most ambitious in the Central Asian region (INTRAC 2011). With substantial donor support Kyrgyzstan underwent a – in the broadest sense – decentralization program which focused on a set of measures including privatization of most economic sectors, price liberalization, macroeconomic stability and fiscal reorientation which made it for several years the outstanding reformer in the Central Asian region (e.g. Light 2007). Hence, Kyrgyzstan is one of the examples where it has to be seen whether decentralization can deliver.

The important agricultural sector, which remains to contribute with about 20 percent to GDP (see Figure A-2 in the Annex) and which provides the majority of income opportunities to the poor (World Bank 2007b), was strongly affected by the disintegration of the Soviet economy. As a result of the subsequent deconstruction of the centrally managed kolkhoz and sovkhoz farming system, due to which all management structures vanished, agricultural infrastructure progressively decayed and is currently in a state of deterioration. Besides, farming families face severe constraints with respect to input and service provision.

The breakdown of the Soviet economic and political system left a void in economic, social and administrative public service provision in the rural areas and contributed to drastic loss in infrastructure (World Bank 2007b). While some economic progress is achieved, with an exception of 2005, annual GDP growth rates are positive since 1996 (see Figure A-2 in the Annex) – there are still considerable problems in service provision. Statistics indicate that neither general public services, nor farm and agricultural services are sufficiently provided. A 2005 household study by the National State Statistics Committee found that “almost a third (28 %) of the population living in rural areas take drinking water from rivers, springs and ditches, [...] less than 25% of the population of the republic has access to a sewage system; [and] less than 15% of poor households use a centralized method of waste collection” (SAEPF and UNDP 2007: 44).

In the agricultural service sector a decentralization program called *Agrarian Policy Concept until 2010* has been launched that shifted responsibility for a number of previously publicly provided agricultural services to local level administrations, private entrepreneurs and civil society organizations. Until now, the scholarly literature on the effects of the Kyrgyz decentralization program is sporadic. Reports from international organizations working in different service areas and statistical data indicate that adequate services provision in rural areas of Kyrgyzstan has not been achieved, yet and pace and scope of decentralization is rather slow. The few reports that are available are discouraging as inadequate supply or provision but also entire absence and bad quality is reported for most agricultural services. Problems have been reported for the following agricultural service areas: fertilizer provision; machinery services; irrigation management;

pasture management and administration; veterinary services including artificial insemination, and appropriate vaccination; agricultural extension; machinery renting services and seed provision (Goletti and Chabot 2000; Herrfahrdt et al. 2006; Light 2007; MAWRPI et al. 2007; Sabates-Wheeler and Childress 2004; Schillhorn van Veen 2004; Sehring 2007; UI Hassan et al. 2004; UNEP 2006; World Bank 2007a).

While the available data on rural and agricultural services provides sporadic information on the outcomes of service decentralization, the actual practice of service decentralization is not explored. Until now, there is no scholarly information on the local processes that bring about service provision and production. The lack of knowledge on the practice of service decentralization also hinders the development of policy measures to improve the efficiency of the decentralization process. Neither an analysis of implementation procedures at municipality level nor comprehensive documentation of the effects of decentralization on service availability, cost and accessibility of agricultural and other services is at hand. This is particularly unfortunate as exactly such contextual information has been shown to play a decisive role of the implementation context and the specific local conditions on reform outcomes in the post-Soviet context (Hanisch 2003; Schlüter 2001; Theesfeld 2005). Based on the experience from these works, it has been proposed that a successful post-Soviet policy reform design needs to take local conditions into account and requires some sort of non-typical process of institutional change that involves both policy reform initiatives from the top and locally based institutional change (Hagedorn and Gatzweiler 2003).

The available research it is not clear to which extent such interrelated processes of institutional design actually happen in Kyrgyzstan.

The following chapters therefore study if local involvement and bottom-up processes, if at all, take place at local levels during actual policy implementation. I use case studies of policy implementation at municipality-level and describe and explain ongoing processes of institutional change in the Kyrgyz agricultural sector that occurred as a result of the decentralization of previously publicly provided services. The studies in this book look into different aspects of formal and informal institutional change in Kyrgyzstan. More specifically it is being studied:

- What decentralization-related formal institutions, i.e. laws and regulations have been designed in the agricultural sector?
- To which extent and how are these formal rules being implemented?
- How are previously publicly provided agricultural services provided today?
- Which institutions for agricultural service provision emerge as a result of the decentralization of previously publicly provided agricultural services?



Each chapter of this book is written in the form of an essay. This means that each chapter can stand by itself and can be understood without reference to any other chapter. It implies that there are some overlaps in methods and theory. The chapters are, however, tightly linked: the following two essays, Chapters 2 and 3, provide detailed contextual information on what decentralization actually means in the Kyrgyz Republic in terms of governance structures in general and further provide specific information on institutional change in the agricultural sector. Those details allow the reader to better contextualize the findings from three specific studies on the decentralization of pasture management in three essays following in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. Those chapters have been published in international peer-reviewed journals. Footnotes in the beginning of each of those chapters inform the reader about the respective publishing journal.

In the first essay, I set the ground for the following studies. I introduce a concept based on which I review the state of the art of scholarly research on decentralization, local governance and agricultural services and analyse to which degree the legal provisions relate to the analytical concept of decentralization. In this essay I seek to investigate the nature and scope of decentralization and its implications for local governance and municipality-level agricultural service provision. The legal analysis shows the government's attempt to allocate service provision tasks to different levels of state actors, municipality administrations – which are on paper independent from the state, private service providers and donors. This analysis finds a difficult degree of incomprehensiveness of legal regulations, overlaps in formal authority and only sporadic implementation. The essay concludes with an outline of the specific knowledge gaps in terms of agricultural service provision and decentralization.

In the second essay, I use a multiple case study in four rural study sites in Kyrgyzstan in order to explore the relationship of decentralized governance and service provision. This study finds that municipality-level decision making has not supported the evolution of sufficient agricultural services at municipality-level, because of the inaccessibility of knowledge and financial means. Decentralization has, instead led to municipality actors' dependence on external service providers, mainly donor organizations, which the municipality-level governments find difficult to hold accountable.

The focus of the remaining essays is on decentralization in pasture management: a community-based management reform which was introduced in the pasture sector after a new law *On Pastures* had been signed in 2009. Among several donor-initiated reforms the reform of pasture management is a major project.

In the fourth essay, I revisit the pre-decentralization period of pasture management. I explore the rationale based on which the community-based management reform has been implemented. The then dominating argument was that the pre-reform situation of dispersed administrative responsibility for

pasture administration hinders seasonal livestock migration. Based on that rationale, the unifying pasture management authority at the municipality-level was believed to increase livestock mobility. By using information from a single case study, the chapter studies the effective formal and informal rules for pasture access in the pre-reform period and how those rules determine migration – in other words the choice of pasture areas by herders. Contrary to what other studies have found, this study suggests that, in the case study municipality, administrative hurdles were not a major cause of the abandonment of seasonal migration. Based on this finding, I conclude that replacing dispersed administrative authority with community-based pasture management is likely not to necessarily improve the sustainable use of pastures and boost livestock mobility. The conclusion is that community-based management is only likely to lead to an increase in livestock mobility if effective local enforcement rules and a non-local enforcement authority are established.

The book continues with two in-depth implementation studies of that law *On Pastures*. Chapters five and six employ a newly developed analytical framework for the study of policy implementation processes which help to understand policy implementers' choice of action.

In Chapter five I study the design of rules for the creation of CBNRM governance bodies. Empirical data comes from a multiple case study. The analysis builds on a modification of Kiser and Ostroms's three-leveled approach to the study of institutional change. The study finds that multiple actors were involved in a multi-phased rule design process under conditions of legal pluralism. It documents a case of institutional change which is triggered by exogenous (re)design of formal institutions leading to local-level institutional design strongly impacted by the distribution of authority among members of the local implementation network and the objectives of each actor group.

In Chapter six, I explore information rule design. This chapter looks into lowest-level policy implementers' (street-level bureaucrats') role in donor-initiated natural resource governance reforms. I use an institutional analysis framework with a specific policy implementation focus. A multiple case study reviews a resource user information campaign during the early phase of the community-based pasture management reform. It finds the simplification of implementation rules by policy implementers at the expense of full resource user involvement. This results from an insufficient contextual fit of the formal information rules. The results emphasize the need of well-designed implementation rules in order to ensure full and equitable resource user involvement in community-based natural resource management (CBNRM).

In the concluding section in Chapter 7 I review my contribution to the literature on service decentralization research in Kyrgyzstan, draw conclusions my studies have for decentralization research in general and explore its implications for decentralization implementation practice in general and in Kyrgyzstan in particular. I also discuss theoretical insights gained from the use

of already existing approaches of analysis of institutional change and critically review the contribution my own study framework can make.

**Table 1-1: Structure of the book**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Essay title</b>	<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Key content</b>
1	Decentralization and agricultural service provision in post-socialist Kyrgyzstan	Introduction	Problem statement, research interest and outline of book's structure
2	Exploring decentralization	Literature review and document analysis	Review of agricultural reform strategies in Kyrgyzstan Legal provisions and the administrative context for policy reform implementation
3	Decentralization of agricultural service provision	Case study	Case study on governance structures and service provision in four rural communities
4	Improving the sustainability of pasture use in Kyrgyzstan: the impact of pasture governance reforms	Case study	Study of implementation practice and impacts of the 2002 pasture governance reform on sustainability of pasture use
5	Introducing decentralized pasture governance in Kyrgyzstan: designing implementation rules	Case study	Study of implementation of 2009 pasture governance reform Establishment of Community-based organizations
6	Street-level bureaucrats at work: a municipality-level analysis of community-based natural resource	Case study	Study of implementation of 2009 pasture governance reform Resource user participation and involvement

	management implementation practice in the pasture sector of Kyrgyzstan		
7	Conclusion	Summary of findings and conclusion	Studies' contribution to the literature on service decentralization and community-based natural resource management and practical implications.

## **2 Exploring decentralization**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I investigate the nature and scope of decentralization and its implications for local governance and municipality-level agricultural service provision in Kyrgyzstan. For this, I review the available literature on decentralization, local governance and agricultural service decentralization and analyze legal documents and expert interviews. This chapter reviews the legal basis for decentralization reforms in Kyrgyzstan in general and for the agricultural sector in particular. It then presents two results of decentralization: the present governance structure and the status of agricultural services. The concluding section outlines knowledge gaps and links the chapter to the following empirical analysis of municipality-level governance and decentralized service provision. This chapter explains the governance structures which impact the design of local institutions which will be explored in the following chapters. The following sections seek to answer these questions:

- How has decentralization impacted local governance in Kyrgyzstan?
- Which specific roles have different actors received in agricultural service provision?
- Which impact has decentralization had on agricultural service provision in Kyrgyzstan?
- What knowledge gaps about the relations of decentralization and agricultural service provision exist?

Because “decentralization” is not precisely defined, there is a lack of comprehensive analytical frameworks to study it. In Section 2.2, I therefore develop, based on works by Agrawal and Ribot (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Agrawal and Ostrom 2001), an analytical framework to study institutional change in the form of decentralization in Kyrgyzstan. In Section 2.3, I investigate the key elements of decentralization derived from the analytical framework: actors, the transfer of authority and accountability relationships. This is followed by Section 2.4, where I review the literature about the impact of decentralization on agricultural service provisions. I summarize the findings in Section 2.5 and conclude by mentioning relevant knowledge gaps (Section 2.6).

### **2.2 Exploring decentralization – a study framework**

Decentralization is often analyzed using frameworks that have been first proposed by Rondinelli et al. (1983). Rondinelli et al. study several “types of

decentralization” (Rondinelli et al. 1983: 13f.): deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatization.

Deconcentration refers to

“[...] handling over some amount of administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels within central government ministries and agencies. It is a shifting of the workload from centrally located officials to staff or offices outside of the national capital. Deconcentration, when it is more than mere reorganization, gives some discretion to field agents to plan and implement programs and projects, or to adjust central directives to local conditions, within guidelines set by central ministry or agency headquarters” (Rondinelli et al. 1983: 14-15).

Delegation refers to transferring authority to organizations outside the state apparatus. Devolution refers to transferring authority to local governments, but also to non-state bodies, such as user groups. In the decentralization literature privatization is usually understood as the transfer of responsibility for government services to

“[...] privately owned or controlled enterprises [...] but also organizations that represent various interests in society and that are established and operated by members of those organizations [such as] farmers’ cooperatives, credit associations, mutual aid societies, village development organizations, trade unions, or women’s and youth clubs” (Rondinelli et al. 1983: 28).

Similarly widespread is a classification into political, fiscal and administrative decentralization. Political decentralization focuses on transferring power to the electorate. Fiscal decentralization refers to a downward transfer of the power to tax and generate public revenues. Administrative decentralization describes power transfer within the government hierarchy. Administrative decentralization is further split into the aforementioned categories of deconcentration, delegation and devolution (e.g. Gregersen et al. 2004: 4).

The available classifications have been criticized for not holding as analytical categories and not allowing to disentangle real processes of decentralization (Agrawal and Ribot 1999; Ribot 2002a and Ribot 2002b). Therefore, Agrawal and Ribot have proposed

“[...] a framework to examine whether the policy choices being made [...] constitute decentralization. Governments often perform acts of decentralization as theater pieces to impress or appease international donors and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or domestic constituencies. Our framework can be seen as an analytical lens for assessing reforms in the name of decentralization. It can be used to identify shortfalls in decentralization – design flaws or political obfuscation. Identification of such flaws can allow advocates of decentralization to push reforms beyond proclamations and closer to action on the ground. [...] Instead of identifying decentralization simply as an institution reform in the political, fiscal or administrative realm, as is commonly done, our framework shows how a particular reform can be analysed by referring to changes in actors, powers or accountability” (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 474-475).

The framework helps to study “constituent elements” (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007, 48) that are found in all decentralization processes: “the powers of various actors, the domains in which they exercise their powers, and to whom and how they are accountable” (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 5). Elsewhere, Ribot has called those elements “dimensions of decentralization” (Ribot 2002a: 16-31).

### *2.2.1 Actors*

Decentralization usually requires joint action by members of central government, international donors, lobby groups and many others (Agrawal and Ribot 1999). These actors differ in their particular accountability relations and have certain powers:

“These [accountability] relations depend on the historical, social, and political constitution of the powers of each of the actors, which may be based on ideology, wealth, heredity, election, appointment, or other means. Actors may also be differentiated from each other by their beliefs and objectives; the internal structure of their organization, including the membership and funding sources of the organization, and the laws to which they are subject” (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 476).

The actors thus might differ in their support of decentralization programs. Among actors’ objectives, increasing power and economic benefits have been discussed as particularly important. Agrawal and Ostrom (2007) propose an overview of characteristic interests in decentralization for each of what they consider the most relevant actor groups (see Table 2-1).

Central governments are “congeries of decision makers who have conflicting objectives and who lack unified rationalities and common agendas” (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007: 49). Budgetary and power-related consequences might impact the central government’s role in decentralization. On one hand, government might be a potential critic of decentralization, fearing an erosion of its power; on the other, it might anticipate an opportunity to increase its budget. Transferring difficult and expensive public service tasks to lower levels of the administration, private or civil society actors – i.e., transferring “service costs” (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007:45) from the central budget to other budgets – might also support an interest in decentralization. In addition, adopting decentralization policies allows access to international donor support, so that “access to ... resources can become [the] incentive” (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007: 50) to opt for decentralization.

Besides budgetary considerations, perceptions of influence and power distribution may also affect the government’s decision what to decentralize to whom. Decisions for or against decentralization are hence no different from other do-



mains, but driven by considerations on relative influence (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007: 49).

Local governments, like central governments, are also motivated by potential economic benefits and influence.<sup>2</sup> They might expect more authority and relevance from increasing local budgets through fiscal decentralization. Opportunities for local rent-seeking might also render support to decentralization. Resistance might emerge from expected erosion of power and local acceptance, if the delegation of tasks is not accompanied by sufficient funds to actually perform these tasks (Clark 1984).

The second group of actors identified by Agrawal and Ostrom (2007) are called “international organizations”, which refers to

“... international actors and bilateral agencies and multilateral actors – such as donors – who support decentralization in order to create a political-administrative environment which makes it easier for them to manage own funds. Hence, decentralization can be a means to pursue other objectives, as an ‘instrument to leverage the funds they disburse more efficiently’ (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007: 50).

“Lobby groups” hold a similar position – Agrawal and Ostrom apply this term to major supra-national organizations – for example the United Nations or the World Bank – which they call NGOs, but also to local civil society organizations<sup>3</sup> who expect funding in the course of decentralization.

In summary, Agrawal, Ribot and Ostrom (Agrawal and Ostrom 2007; Agrawal and Ribot 1999) propose the following criteria to analyse actors’ roles in decentralization programs: (i) interests and objectives; (ii) the internal structure of their organization; (iii) their funding sources and (iv) the legal framework within which they operate.

**Table 2-1: Actors’ roles in decentralization**

Actors	Supportive role	Limitations
Central governments	Can formally initiate legal decentralization	Cannot ensure participation of local actors

<sup>2</sup> I add local governments – which are not specifically discussed by Agrawal and Ostrom (2007) – as a group of actors.

<sup>3</sup> I emphasise this definition used by Agrawal and Ostrom (2007) as NGOs are commonly understood as civil society organizations.

International actors	Provide monetary and financial incentives for central governments Assume better control of funds	Cannot monitor whether actual decentralization of power occurs
Local actors, lobby groups	Support is required to put decentralization into practice Interested in obtaining financial resources and decision making power	Too weak to exert pressure on central government actors to undertake decentralization program

Source: own representation based on Agrawal and Ostrom (2007: 50)

### 2.2.2 Power

In the following section, I adjust the power element in Agrawal and Ribots's (1999) framework to my analytical purpose. I add an approach to power transfer based on property rights.

To study power transfers, Agrawal and Ribot (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 476f.) suggest four types of power: (i) power to create and change rules; (ii) power to decide about using resources and opportunities; (iii) power to control rule compliance; (iv) power to resolve conflicts.

However, for this study I would like to modify Agrawal and Ribot's vague concept of power which, for example, cannot explain why power to change rules needs to be distinguished from "power to make decisions in some domain of action that influences others" (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 477). Such classification ignores that changed rules often influence other actors' domains of action. To apply the Agrawal and Ribot framework to decentralization in Kyrgyzstan, I propose four classes of rights which capture the relevant power transfers in the Kyrgyz decentralization legislation:

- The right to allocate property rights and other benefits;
- the right to acquire new property rights;
- the right to contribute to collective decisions; and
- the right to information.

The rights are listed by descending value. I define the value of a right as the degree to which it allows its holder to act independently and/or impose his or her will on other actors.

Rights to distribute property rights and duties refers to rights which allow the rights holder to transfer benefits and costs to third parties and therefore put him or her (depending on the economic value of the property rights and duties that are to be distributed) into a powerful position.

Rights to acquire new property rights are rights which allow the rights holder to expand his or her bundle of rights and make him or her less dependent on third parties. Such rights are therefore very important in order to allow the rights holder to expand his or her realm of autonomous decision making. The two types of rights, mentioned above, are linked. Often, the right to acquire new property rights is linked to the right to allocate property rights and duties. In the Kyrgyz case it means that local governments first receive rights to a share of the local budget (acquisition of new property rights), which they are also entitled to use for municipality-level purposes (the right to distribute benefits – in other words property rights – from the acquired financial resources).

The right to contribute to collective decision making allows actors to express interests and opinions but gives no direct power to impact behaviour of others. The third group of rights therefore offers less power than the first two.

For the study of power transfers it is also important to explore the allocation of rights to obtain information. Which information rights are allocated to whom determines the structure of accountability relationships in decentralization situations. In the context of decentralization, access to knowledge about responsibilities and actions of others, for example central and local governments, but also other locally relevant processes and facts, such as of the status of the physical environment are important sources of power. Those rights, as will be shown below, are particularly relevant as they are an important precondition based on which functioning accountability relationships might occur.

**Table 2-2: Framework for institutional analysis of decentralization**

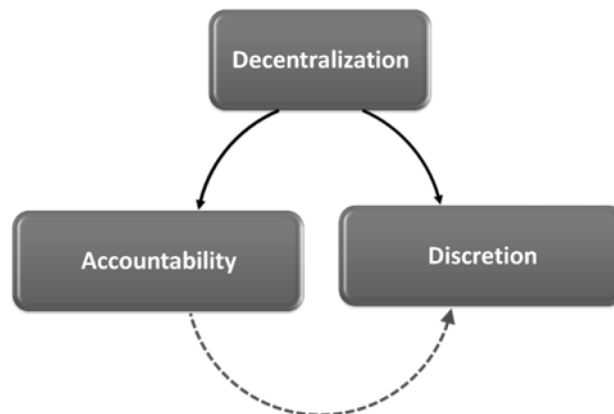
<b>Class of rights decentralized</b>	<b>Specifications for the study of decentralization in Kyrgyzstan</b>
Rights to allocate property rights and duties	The right to decide about income opportunities of third parties. This includes the right to hire and fire staff.
	The right to decide about the direction of benefit streams from property rights to resources to third parties. This includes the right to allocate land, pastures or other natural resources to citizens.
Rights to acquisition of new property rights	The right to use public or privately owned resources without interference from others.
Rights to participate in decision making	The right to form interest groups.
	The right to make recommendations to government bodies.
Rights to information	Right to receive information about actions of others.

### 2.2.3 Accountability

In its narrow meaning, accountability has become synonymous with answerability and responsibility (Callahan 2007) or answerability and enforcement (Brinkerhoff 2001). Accountability is a relationship in any system of control in which one actor has the right to demand reporting on certain activities from the other actor and also holds the right to impose sanctions. Consequently, “being accountable means having the obligation to answer questions regarding decisions and/or actions” (Brinkerhoff 2001: 2).

Depending on where principal and agent are located, accountability relationships might be directed *upward* or *downward*, *horizontally* or *inward* (Eun 2010). *Upward accountability* relationships entail answerability of subordinates to supervisors, e.g., local bureaucrats to higher – more centralized – authorities, or grant recipients to donor organizations. *Downward accountability* usually refers to administrators’ obligation to actors outside their organization such as the public, the press or the electorate, service users and interest groups. *Inward-accountability*<sup>4</sup> refers to answerability of sub-units of an organization to each other, this also includes the accountability of higher levels to lower levels. Lastly, *horizontal* accountability refers to obligations within peer groups, such as among members of professional volunteer organizations.

**Figure 2-1: Relation between decentralization, accountability and discretion**



Source: own representation

*Accountability* is claimed to be the heart of good governance (Callahan 2007) and decentralization programs (Blair 2001) and determines their “effectiveness” (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 478). *Accountability* is important in controlling *dis-*

---

<sup>4</sup> Inward accountability has – however – also been discussed as an inward sense of moral obligation or responsibility and has also been called professional, personal subjective accountability (see discussion in Mulgan 2000: 558f).

*cretion* – in other words autonomy – which is inevitably increased in any meaningful decentralization process. In the decentralization context, *discretion* might be understood as the “ability of local governments to carry out in their own manner their own particular objectives in accordance with their own standards of implementation” (Clark 1984: 199). Hence, discretion entails the danger of arbitrary action, corruption, elite capture and the like. Therefore, successful decentralization is believed to depend on functioning accountability relationships, which control or “manage discretion” (also Brinkerhoff et al. 2007) (see Figure 2-1).

There are a number of instruments for calling people to account. Efficient accountability mechanisms must, considering the aforementioned elements of accountability provide applicable and functioning means of reporting, in other words information and control. Besides elections, Agrawal and Ribot 1999) propose a list of possible accountability mechanisms including:

“... procedures for recall; referenda; legal recourse through courts; third-party monitoring by media; ... independently elected controllers; audition and evaluation; political pressure and lobbying by associations and associative movements; provision of information on roles and obligations of government by the media and NGOs; public reporting requirements for governments; education; embeddedness of leaders in their community; belief systems of leaders and their communities; civic dedication and pride of leaders; performance awards; widespread participation; social movements; threats of social unrest and resistance; central-state oversight of local government; and taxation” (Agrawal and Ribot 1999: 479).

Choosing the appropriate means of accountability decides about the impact of any decentralization effort. If the accountability mechanism cannot control discretion or does not allow sufficient discretion for specific decisions, decentralization will not produce the intended effects. However, the characteristics of the decentralized transaction determine the required discretion and the appropriate accountability mechanism (Cohen and Peterson 2002). Particularly difficult are transactions tailored to local needs, as they require more discretionary space.

Many authors criticize the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms. They write that introducing solitary, non-contextual mechanisms, such as elections, often does not improve accountability which is impacted by many factors including a supportive political-administrative context:

“Effective accountability requires a statement of goals (whether in adherence to certain rules or achievement of identified performance levels), transparency of decision making and relations, honest reports of what resources have been used and what has been achieved, an appraisal process for the overseeing authority(ies) to judge whether results are satisfactory, and concrete mechanisms for holding to account (i.e. rewarding or penalizing) those responsible for performance” (ODA 1993 quoted in Edwards and Hulme 1996: 967).

The ability of local governments and decision making units to resist corruption or rent-seeking – or citizens’ ability to hold them accountable – is usually debated. However, in the studied context it seems crucial to ensure that local governments or other decentralized units themselves can hold accountable the central government, or others to whom they are upwardly accountable. To improve services at all, the local authorities need resources, information, training and staff.

#### *2.2.4 The literature on decentralization and agricultural services*

The literature on decentralization in Kyrgyzstan is scarce. Only two empirical studies on decentralization in Kyrgyzstan (Grävingholt et al. 2006; Mukanova 2008) exist (see Table 2-3).

**Table 2-3: Literature on decentralization in Kyrgyz Republic**

Author(s)	Year of publication	Type of publication	Topic	Methods / level of evidence
Alymkulov and Kulatov	2002	Book chapter	Decentralization	No methodology specified
Dukenbayev and Hansen	2003	Working paper	Administrative reforms	No methodology specified
Dukenbayev	2004	Working paper	Decentralization	No method specified
Baimyrzaeva	2005	Internet document	Decentralization	No methodology specified
Grävingholt et al.	2006	Book	Decentralization	Case studies based on “some hundred” semi-structured interviews in 2 cities and 4 municipalities; data analysis methods: coding of interview transcripts and grounded theory
Mukanova	2008	Book chapter	Decentralization	Questionnaire survey in 47 randomly selected municipalities; no methodology

				for data analysis specified
Libman	2008	Working paper	Decentralization	No methodology specified
Baimyrzaeva	2010	Journal article	Decentralization	No methodology specified
INTRAC	2011	Report	Decentralization	No methodology specified
Liebert and Tiulenov	2013	Book chap- ter	Decentralization	No methodology specified

Source: own table

The same holds for the literature on agricultural service provision. It consists mainly of gray literature<sup>5</sup> or donor-commissioned reports of which many are anecdotal. With irrigation (Sehring 2007; Herrfahrdt et al. 2006) as the only exception, all these documents, both on decentralization and agricultural service provision lack information on data collection strategies and analysis. For most agricultural services no literature at all existed, not even informal online documents.

### 2.2.5 Laws and regulations on decentralization

The available literature does not explore the role of municipality-level actors in providing agricultural services. An analytical problem during the early stages of the research for this book was therefore to gain an overview of the actual distribution of authority and responsibility for agricultural service provision and to identify specific tasks of municipality-level actors (the municipality government in particular). Two sets of laws were identified: (i) decentralization-related, delegating natural resource distribution to municipality-level actors; and (ii) defining responsibilities in agricultural service provision. Laws prescribing actors' roles, their power and accountability relationships were also identified.

---

<sup>5</sup> "Grey literature stands for manifold document types produced at all levels of government, academics, business [and] industry (on-governmental organisations, multilateral organisations and international financial institutions), in print and electronic formats that are protected by intellectual property rights, of sufficient quality to be collected and preserved by library holdings or institutional repositories, but not controlled by commercial publishers, i.e. where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body" (Schopf 2010 quoted in Shigaeva et al. 2013: 17).

The massive scope of new regulations, changing directions within the drafted laws and a piecemeal approach in many of them complicated finding relevant legal provisions.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, expert interviews were necessary to find background information on laws for local agricultural service provision. 19 expert interviews were held with officials at the central and district levels, including staff of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry (MAWRPI) as well as the Agency for Local Self-government. International Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in charge of implementing decentralization programs were also interviewed, including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Delegation of the European Union in the Kyrgyz Republic, which ran projects focusing on decentralization and civil service reforms, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which promoted decentralization of land administration, and the Hanns Seidel Foundation, which supported public administration education and training. Other interviews were held with state, private and NGO agricultural service providers engaged in legal rural advice, input trade, rural advisory and veterinary services. Respondents were identified by snowball sampling. This started with an online research for organizations involved in supporting Kyrgyz decentralization reforms.

As the objective was to research the relationship between decentralization legislation and its effective agricultural service provision at municipality-level, the interviews were used not just to identify relevant legislation, but also to find information about ongoing decentralization processes. The four key questions were therefore:

- Which laws and regulations do you consider most relevant for the ongoing decentralization process?
- What do you think about the current status of the implementation of the decentralization reforms?
- Which challenges to reform implementation do you observe?
- What specific impact of decentralization on the provision of agricultural services do you see?

---

<sup>6</sup>A review of existing studies on decentralization provides an outline of the legislation specific to local self-government (Alymkulov and Kulatov 2002; Grävingholt et al. 2006; INTRAC 2011; Mukanova 2008; (UNDP and GKR 2005). However, the authors consider different legal provisions relevant. Grävingholt et al. (2006) refer to only one law and the National Decentralization Strategy (Grävingholt et al. 2006: 44-48), whereas authors of the INTRAC report on decentralization refer to 5 laws and normative acts (INTRAC 2011: 2); Alymkulov and Kulatov list 24 resolutions, 30 decrees and 8 laws as “major legislation” (Alymkulov and Kulatov 2002; 591-593), and Mukanova also refers to 8 basic regulations, albeit different ones (Mukanova 2008: 249).



The expert interviews and information from the literature identified 21 laws and legal acts which respondents considered most important (see Table 2-4). The contents of both bodies of laws – broader decentralization legislation and agricultural laws – were analyzed. The remainder of this chapter reviews findings from the literature and from laws and policy documents, based on the analytical framework developed in Section 2.2.

#### 2.2.5.1 Decentralization of governance – the key legislative acts

Governance reforms started in the early 1990s with the law *On Local Government in the Kyrgyz Republic* (1991) and a constitution (1993) which states that “local government” is to be “exercised by local communities”. A large body of laws, presidential decrees and regulations has emerged since then: the law *On Local Self-government and Local Self-administration* in 1992, the establishment of independent municipal administrations in 1996 and the creation of municipal-level Local Self-governments (LSGs) were landmarks of the early decentralization process. More laws took effect in 2002, most significantly the law *On Local Self-government and Local State Administration*. This law was amended in 2008. A *National Strategy on Decentralization of Public Administration and Local Governance Development in Kyrgyzstan until 2010* was also adopted in 2002.

At the time of data collection, the 2006 *Country Development Strategy for 2006-2010* was the government-approved guideline for agricultural, environmental and social sector developments in rural areas. Besides general poverty eradication and decentralization issues, it includes agricultural and environmental objectives, such as developing agricultural support services; and improving the normative-legislative base governing agriculture (MAWRPI et al. 2007).

#### 2.2.5.2 Decentralizing service provision to the agricultural sector – the key documents

The key document outlining reforms in the agricultural sector is the *Agricultural Sector Program* (1995). It covers 36 reform measures for decentralization, including: (i) supporting land reform and farm restructuring; (ii) improving water rights management and user contribution in irrigation water use; (iii) improving markets of input supplies; (iv) improving social protection; (v) promoting environmental protection; and (vi) enhancing institutional capacity building and restructuring of selected government agencies. The primary sector reform program was followed by other measures, the most important of which are a new *Land Code* (1999), the law *On State Registration of Rights to Immovable Property* (1998), the law *On Water* (1994, latest amendments in 2002), the law *On Unions of Water Users* (2002), the *Resolution of the Government of the*

*Kyrgyz Republic on Approval of the Regulations on Order of Allocation of Pastures for Rent and Use* (2002), and the law *On Pastures* (2009).

In 2004, the *Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010*, prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry (MAWRPI), was issued.

### **2.3 Governance reforms and decentralization**

Since its declaration of independence in 1991, the former Soviet Republic of Kyrgyzstan experienced a drastic transformation. Together with Kazakhstan, it has gained a reputation as the Central Asian country most open to economic reforms.<sup>7</sup> In the early years of the reform – compared to the rest of the Central Asian states – Kyrgyzstan achieved good progress towards political decentralization and economic liberalization (Alymkulov and Kulatov 2002; Goletti and Chabot 2000; Grävingholt et al. 2006; World Bank 2001).

Besides poverty eradication, political and fiscal decentralization reportedly became one of the main policy objectives of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (GKR):

“Three of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic’s overall policy objectives ... are the alleviation of poverty, improvements in the level and quality of the population’s living standards, and effective democratic governance, including decentralization and providing local communities with more authority and improved budgets” (MAWRPI et al. 2007: 6).

Particularly in the first years after independence, the GKR demonstrated a considerable commitment to administrative decentralization by creating a Ministry of Local Self-government and the post of a Minister of Local Self-Governance and Regional Development in 2000. However – one might consider it symptomatic – this ministry was not endowed with an own administrative apparatus.

Decentralization has largely been initiated by international donor organizations. Donors not only played a key role in formulating the decentralization policy documents, but also as its main implementers. Donor organizations supported the decentralization program through various interventions, including advice for drafting decentralization policies at the national level, capacity building at different administrative levels and among

---

<sup>7</sup> The *National Strategy for Further Decentralization and Local Self-government Development in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010* (GKR 2002) – which is discussed further down – covers the areas of “political and administrative decentralization, financial and economic decentralization, municipal service delivery, social mobilization and society consolidation” (Grävingholt 2006: 48) and was – by 2006 – considered the most progressive policy document developed in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

civil society organizations, support in designing and implementing fiscal decentralization and provision of basic administrative infrastructure, such as computers (ADB 2012; Mukanova 2008). Thereby, donors became very influential (Pétrie 2005) and – by the mid 2000s – were even described to be as influential as the Soviet administration once was (Baimyrzaeva 2005).

**Table 2-4: Major legal acts in transferring authority to the municipality level (1999-2009)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Legal act and outline of key provisions</b>
1990	<b>Law <i>On Local Self-governance</i>*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of local councils</li> </ul>
1991	<b>Law <i>On Local Self-government in the Kyrgyz Republic</i>*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vague definition of local self-governance system</li> </ul> <b>Decree <i>On Peasant Farms</i>, February</b> <b>Law <i>On Land Reform</i>*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local councils receive right to allocate land of former collective and state farms to individual farmers</li> </ul>
1992	<b>Presidential decree <i>On Local Self-government and Local Self-administration</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens receive rights to equal shares of restructured non-land assets of former state and collective farms</li> <li>• Rural committees formed (head appointed by district administration) and receive responsibility for dissolution of state and collective farms</li> </ul>
1993	<b>Constitution</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local governments receive right to self-governance (but only few means to execute it)</li> <li>• Separation of Local Self-governments and national authorities promulgated (but no separate local administration established)</li> </ul>
1994	<b>Presidential decree <i>On Measures to Enhance the Land and Agrarian Reform in the Kyrgyz Republic</i> (and additional land decrees in 1995, 1996), February</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National land fund transferred to land redistribution fund (from <i>district</i> administration to MAWRPI); size of land fund reduced from 50 to 25% of the arable land</li> <li>• Land reform reinforced: land distributed to previous workers, land certificates issued with 99-year lease rights (rural committees play a major role)</li> </ul>
1996	<b>Presidential decree</b>

Year	Legal act and outline of key provisions
	<p><b>Resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, April</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Local Self-government executive bodies<sup>8</sup></li> <li>• Municipality administrations receive right to register land plots, authority over social infrastructure (club houses, libraries, etc.), authority to mobilize local population</li> </ul> <p><b>Tax Code (numerous changes followed)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality administrations entitled to collect 16 different “local taxes”</li> </ul>
1998	<p><b>Referendum on constitutional amendment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformation of citizens’ land use rights into ownership rights</li> </ul> <p><b>Law <i>On Main Principles of Budget Rights in Kyrgyz Republic</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main principles of drafting and implementation of the republican budget and local budgets</li> <li>• Determines budget process of drafting, consideration, approval and implementation of the republican budget and local budget procedures</li> </ul>
1999	<p><b><i>Land Code</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land next to villages defined as communal property to be administered by local councils</li> <li>• Citizens receive usufruct and alienation rights (but exercise of alienation right deferred for five years)</li> </ul> <p><b>Presidential decree</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of State commission to support Local Self-government reform</li> <li>• Domination of local executive bodies over local councils officially acknowledged, therefore number of council members increased to reinforce power base of councils</li> <li>• Introduction of reporting duties of heads of executive bodies to council members</li> </ul>
2001	<p><b>Amendments to <i>Land Code</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality administrations receive management and disposal rights to land under communal ownership, state or Local Self-government bodies are prohibited to interfere in activities of land users</li> <li>• Land sales fully legalized</li> </ul>

---

<sup>8</sup> Aiyl okmotu (Kyrg. “village government”), more recently preferred in official documents is the term Aiyl okrug (Kyrg. “village district”). In this book I refer to this municipality-level governance structure as municipality administrations.

Year	Legal act and outline of key provisions
2002	<p><b>Law <i>On Unions (Associations) of Water Users</i> (amendment of previous decrees: <i>Regulation On WUA's in Rural Areas</i> (1995) and <i>Statute of WUAs in Rural Areas</i> (1997))</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water User Associations receive rights to the management of on-farm irrigation structures<sup>10</sup>, including maintenance responsibilities, and rights to impose fee on water users</li> </ul> <p><b>Law <i>On Local Self-government and Local State Administration</i>, January (amendments 2005 and 2006)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarified principles of autonomous local government and functions distributed between municipality administrations and other administrative bodies</li> <li>• Establishes right of citizen meetings (<i>kurultai</i>) to make recommendations to local council (<i>aiyl kenesh</i>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Law <i>On Communal Ownership of Property</i>, March (amended and renamed law <i>On Municipal Property</i>; 2005)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality administrations receive limited property rights over infrastructure and buildings</li> <li>• Local <i>kenesh</i> responsible to manage and dispose of municipal property, fix prices and tariffs for public utilities provided by the municipal institutions</li> <li>• Income from management of this property and financing of municipal institutions becomes revenue of local governments</li> </ul> <p><b>Decree <i>National Strategy for Decentralization of State Administration and Development of Local Self-government in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010</i></b></p>
2003	<p><b>Action plan for <i>National Strategy for Decentralization of State Administration and Development of Local Self-government in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010</i></b></p> <p><b>Law <i>On Financial and Economic Basis of Local Self-government</i> (contradictions with law <i>On basic principles of budgetary rights</i> led to amendments of this law in 2004 and 2005)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devolution of revenue raising powers; municipality administrations receive rights to tax collection</li> <li>• Budget surpluses remain property of municipality administrations, land tax remains in local budget</li> <li>• States financial and economic independence of municipality</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> The abbreviation is used in the formal title of the law. WUA refers to Water User Association.

<sup>10</sup> On-farm irrigation structures are secondary and tertiary irrigation channels which are located within the boundaries of the previously existing state and collective farms.

---

**Year   Legal act and outline of key provisions**


---

administrations, clarifies sources of income of local self-administrations, limits district administrations' rights to interfere in local tax issues

- Municipality administrations receive right to collect local taxes and non-tax revenue
  - Defines local budgets: clarifies procedures and principles of drafting and implementing the local budget and extra-budgetary funds of the local self-governance bodies of *aiyl*, municipality and town
- 

**2004   Law *On Municipal Service***

- Defines legal status, rights and duties of local administration staff
- Amendments to law *On Basic principles of budget law in the Kyrgyz Republic*
- Prohibits interference of state authorities in local budget affairs
- Defines sources of revenue for local budgets

***Water Code***

- Local Water User Associations become owners of previous on-farm irrigation infrastructure and are responsible for irrigation water management at local levels (previous on-farm irrigation management infrastructure). Water User Associations receive right to independent budgets and to collect fees from water users

***Agrarian Policy Concept until 2010***

- A number of agricultural services are assigned to the private sector and to civil society organizations, such as cooperatives. State's withdrawal from the agricultural sector confirmed (specific regulations lack, financing unclear)
- 

**2005   Law *On Jamaats***

- Local citizen organizations of municipality administrations entitled to own resources, explicitly those received from international donors

**Law *On Municipal Property***

- Improved property rights over movable and immovable property, land, infrastructure, and residential and non-residential funds for municipality administrations
- 

**2006   Action Plan for the *National Decentralization Strategy for 2006-2007* approved by parliament**

- Confirmation of the need to analyze legal and normative acts on decentralization of public administration and development of municipality administrations, as well as elaborate proposals to ensure effective legal framework for the self-governance entities

***Tax Code***

---

**Year   Legal act and outline of key provisions**


---

- Reduction of 16 local taxes to 8 “workable” local taxes (resort tax, advertisement tax, parking tax, waste management tax, hotel tax, local sales tax, real estate tax, vehicle tax)
- 

**2007   Law *On Republican Budget for 2007***


---

- Fiscal decentralization/budgetary system reform comes into effect: two-tier system of interbudgetary relations – local units submit budgets directly to Ministry of Finance and receive direct payments
  - All institutions of *oblast* (region) and *rayon* (district) level are integrated in the republican budget and directly financed from this budget, *de facto* abolishment of independent regional (*oblast*) budgets
  - Improved decision authority of Local Self-governments over establishment and use of local budgets
- 

**2008   Presidential decree**


---

- Instructs government to draft a law *On Republican Budget of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2008*
- Since 2008 autonomous local budgets in some municipality administrations in effect, two-level budgetary system that reduced influence of the regional (*oblast*) administration in budget affairs at local level
- *District (Rayon)* administrative structures shall regain rights to share income tax
- Reestablishment of three-tier budgetary system and retransfer of some power to the regions’ (*oblast*) governors by creating a reserve fund at their disposal

**Amendments to law *On Local Self-government and Local State Administration 2002***


---

- Further task splitting between administrative bodies: municipality administrations receive 17 state authorities and responsibility of 23 “issues of local significance” (such as economic development, municipality property management, drinking water, sewage systems, local roads, establishment of land use and development regulations or heating supply), 10 further competences of *aiyl okrug*, including rights to draft local budgets
  - Action plan for national decentralization strategy for 2008 to 2010 to be approved
  - Government-announced appointment of heads of Local Self-governments by the district (*rayon*) administration from 2009 elections on
- 

**2009   Law *On Pastures***


---

- Transfer of management rights over all pasture land from the

---

**Year   Legal act and outline of key provisions**


---

district (*rayon*) and regional (*oblast*) administrations to municipality administration

- Optional right of municipality administrations to transfer pasture allocation authority to civil society groups (Pasture User Unions)
- 

### 2.3.1 *Actors involved in decentralization*

#### 2.3.1.1 The central government and the local state administration

Understanding roles of actors in decentralization requires a short introduction to the Kyrgyz administrative system. The Kyrgyz administration consists of four levels: the central government, 7 *oblasts* (regions), 40 *rayons* (districts) and 459<sup>11</sup> *aiyl okrugs*.<sup>12</sup> *Aiyl okrug*, for which no English translation exists, refers to the smallest administrative unit. The term *aiyl okrug* is recent; municipality-level administrative bodies were previously called *aiyl ökmöt* (*aul*<sup>13</sup> government) which is still the common name. In the previous section I have and will for the rest of this and the following chapters refer to these lowest-level administrative bodies as municipality administrations.

The territorial administrative division of the country is based on the Soviet structure. The central government consists of the president and the prime minister, who is the head of government and the ministries. Figure 2-4 shows the two parallel structures in the Kyrgyz administration at sub-national level.

The left-hand side of the figure shows the *local state administration (LSA)* – the sub-units of presidential and line ministry offices at regional and district levels. The right-hand side shows a parallel structure, which is called *Local Self-government (LSG)*. It consists of district-level and municipality-level bodies. These bodies consist of representative *keneshs* (*English*: councils) whose members are elected by local residents.

The municipality-level self-government also has an executive body under the head of the municipality council. In some very remote villages, the lowest level

---

<sup>11</sup> Due to inaccurate statistical information and reorganization of the territorial-administrative structure of the country, the number of sub-district administration units has changed. The most recent census has only 440 administrative units classified as *Aiyl okrug* (NSC 2009: 36). At the time of data collection, the official number was 459.

<sup>12</sup> There is no official translation of the term *Aiyl okrug* found in official documents. According to the 2009 Housing Census, *Aiyl okrugs* are “administrative and territorial unit[s] consisting of one or several villages where the local community executes local government according to the Constitution and Laws of the Kyrgyz Republic” (NSC 2009: 71).

<sup>13</sup> *Aul* = local Central Asian and Caucasian term for “village”



of administration is represented by individuals called “village heads” who are appointed by the heads of the municipality. Further discussion of government bodies requires an overview of accountability relations (see Section 2.3.3).

The central government’s support of the decentralization process has periodically changed. Observers found economic and political motivations behind government’s support for decentralization in the early 1990s. Mukanova (2008) and Baimyrzaeva (2010) consider expected revenue savings by transferring services and functions to the municipality-level and a desire to express sensitivity to donor demands for democratic governance the most important reasons.

Decentralization in Kyrgyzstan has experienced different phases (Baimyrzaeva 2010):

- In the period from 1991-1996, privatization and downsizing of government dominated, as the central government sought to save on public employment expenditure.
- The period from 1996 – encouraged by donors who strongly pushed for administrative and governance reforms against growing corruption and drastic theft of public property during the first reform phase – focused on administrative reforms and attempts to strengthen state institutions.
- From 2005 to 2009 – the period under study – President Bakiev first ignored and even aimed to reverse state governance reforms. According to (Baimyrzaeva 2010), the policy documents prepared under his presidency never exerted real impact; from late 2009, reforms for establishing new administrative organizations were initiated. However, those reforms were allegedly aimed at increasing the presidential family’s access to public funds and to weaken political and economic competitors.<sup>14</sup>

Several authors observed little government support for decentralization reforms and little interest in effective change<sup>15</sup> (Alymkulov and Kulatov 2002; Baimyrzaeva 2005; Baimyrzaeva 2010; Asian Development Bank 2012; Liebert and Tiulegenov 2013; Libman 2008); this was confirmed by interview partners. Reasons for the central government’s hesitation include fear of destabilizing

---

<sup>14</sup> My own interviews underline this pessimistic view of the state and the future of decentralization in the country. Many interviewees found that the country had entered a period of re-centralization, continuously growing corruption and a departure from democratic principles.

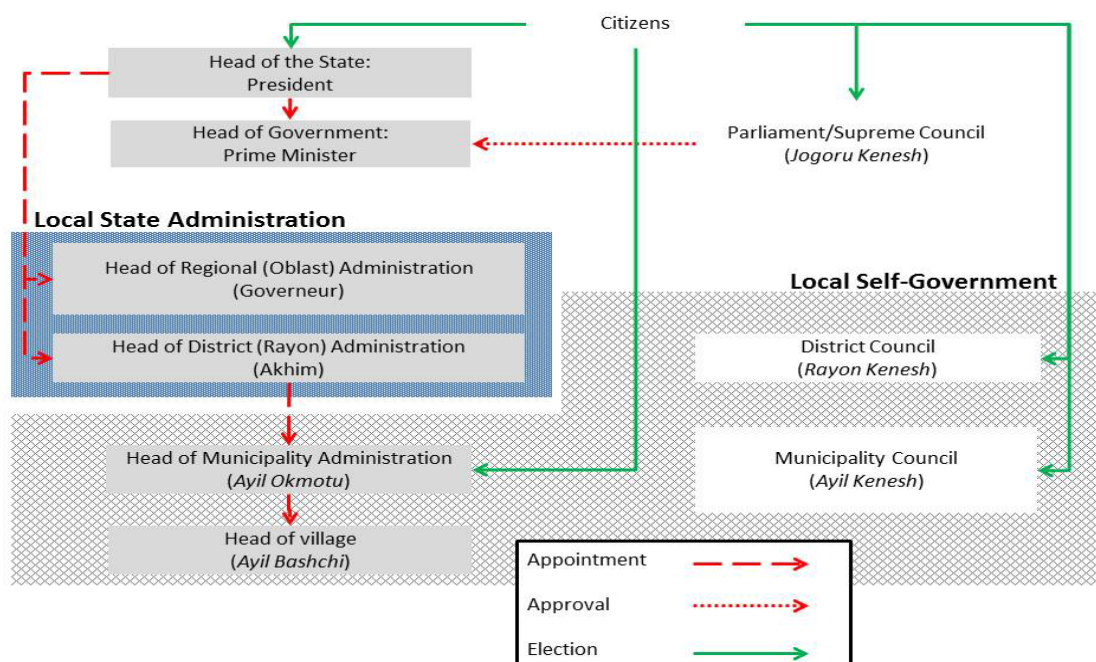
<sup>15</sup> The only scientific paper specifically recognizing government support for the decentralization program is by Pandey and Misnikov (2001). It has to be noted that the authors are employees of the UNDP in Kyrgyzstan.

power networks which sustain seemingly effective channels of corruption (Bai-myraeva 2010).<sup>16</sup>

### 2.3.1.2 Local Self-government and local actors

In Kyrgyzstan, the municipality level formally does not exist. However, authors have used the term *Local Self-governments* synonymous with “municipality level” (Grävingholt et al. 2006; Mukanova 2008). As discussed in the section above, this is not fully correct, because Local Self-governments comprise not only of executive municipality government (*aiyl okmotu*) and the municipality-level elected council (*aiyl kenesh*), but also the district-level elected council.

**Figure 2-2: Governance structure in Kyrgyzstan (2008)**



Source: own representation

In 1996, more than 459<sup>17</sup> municipalities were created. In rural areas, they replaced the *kolkhoz* – Soviet-type collective farms – as the lowest-level authority. Hence, they were formed out of clusters of villages, often along the borders of former collective or state farms. Municipalities consist of 1 to 21 settlements. The municipal executive body includes a head, a secretary and up to seven specialized staff members (see Figure 2-3). Since 2001, the head of the

<sup>16</sup>The same lack of support for decentralization was observed by Grävingholt et al. (2006) at the level of the Local State Administration (LSA).

<sup>17</sup>The exact number changes frequently, since the recent reforms aim to merge local self-government units which are considered too small.

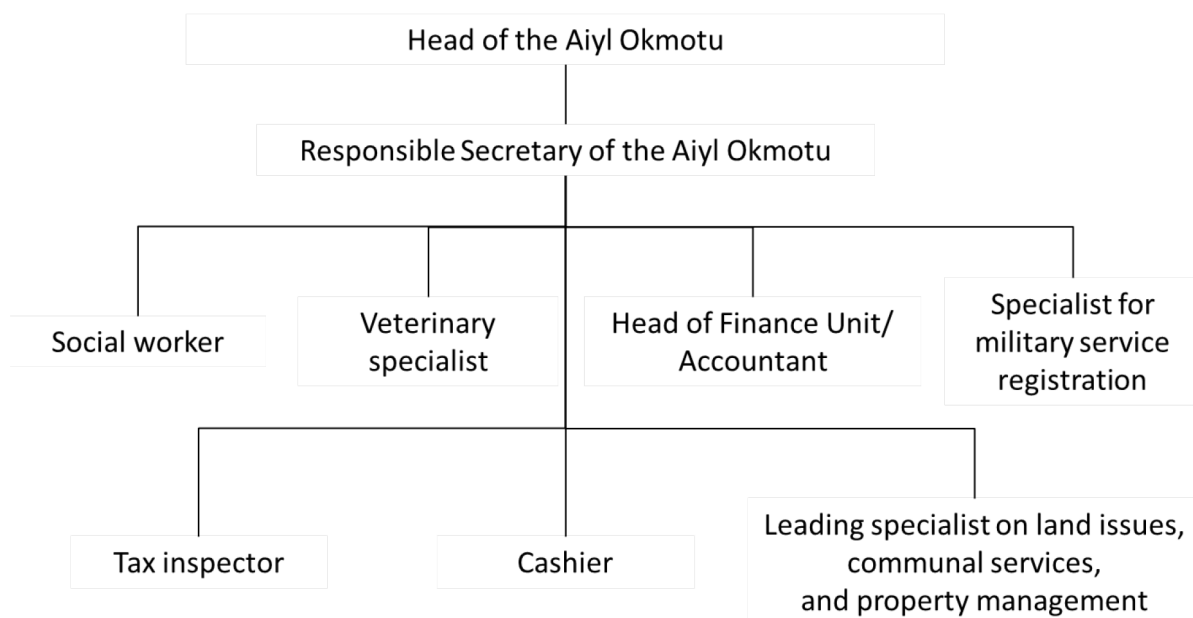
municipality is elected by popular vote. The executive body is, in practice, the local administration and is formally accountable to a municipality council.

The municipality council (*aiyl kenesh*) consists of about 9-15 elected representatives. It controls the municipality government, approves the local budget and controls its use, manages and controls communal property and approves community by-laws.

According to the Tax Code, the municipality budget consists of so-called tax and non-tax revenues collected at municipality level and of national-level tax and non-tax revenues partially transferred back to the municipality. The municipality also receives other transfers from the national level. However, local revenues are far too small to cover even basic expenditures, such as staff salaries (Mukanova 2008; Liebert and Tiulegenov 2013). Hence, the municipality government fully depends on grants and transfers from the central government and possesses no economic autonomy (further details on municipality budgets are described in Section 2.3.2.3). Municipalities also suffer from limited capacities and inadequately qualified staff members (Mukanova 2008; Grävingholt et al. 2006).

For lack of empirical studies, there is no information on roles of municipality-level actors during decentralization. Mukanovas' (2008) study suggests that municipality-level actors participated passively in designing decentralization legislation.

**Figure 2-3: Structure of the municipality government (aiyl okmotu)**



Source: own representation based on Mukanova (2008: 215-216)

### 2.3.1.3 External donors

Donors very much supported decentralization, particularly since the mid 1990s. Their main objectives are documented in policy papers, part of which they initiated: poverty eradication, economic growth and environmental protection are among the key motivations for decentralization. Donors also hoped to improve government administration of donor funds and cooperation with the government in general.<sup>18</sup>

Key donors involved in supporting the decentralization reforms are the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Department for International Development (DFID), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the US Agency for International Development (USAID) through an organization called *Urban Institute*, the World Bank through a *Community and Development Agency* called ARIS, Soros Foundation and many others (INTRAC 2011; Mukanova 2008).

Donors' main activities have been summarized as policy development, capacity building and support of fiscal decentralization, as well as improving local administrative infrastructure (INTRAC 2011). Donor focus has shifted over the years. Action plans developed by donors and government focused on issues like local development or local budgets. Reports indicate that different donors played different roles throughout the decentralization process. Although donors were the initial force behind decentralization, critics mention the negative role donors have also had on decentralization: lack of sensitivity for local conditions and insufficient efforts for administrative change. Baimyrzaeva (2010) notes that donors started decentralization in the Kyrgyz Republic based on wrong assumptions about the best administrative system for the country, insufficient support for developing administrative norms and professional standards, as well as failure to support, monitor and enforce the policy changes they had initiated:

“[D]onor incentives, especially during Akaev's regime, did play a role in promoting reforms, but donor promises were flawed – they readily accepted reform outputs (laws, provision, and organizational changes) instead of outcomes. This had the effect of neutralizing any impact on changing targeted behaviour and practices” (Baimyrzaeva 2010: 43).<sup>19</sup>

Since the beginning of the decentralization process, donors have been strongly involved in reform design and have commented on the government's policies. Donors have frequently reemphasised a need for withdrawal of the state. In its

---

<sup>18</sup>See Section 2.2.3 for an outline of these regulations.

<sup>19</sup>Why donor organizations failed to implement meaningful decentralization is beyond the scope of this section. However, it seems to have resulted from donors' internal incentive systems, which prioritized quantitative document production instead of unquantifiable real impacts. This however, is a problem clearly not limited to donor involvement in Kyrgyz Republic.

Livestock Sector Review of 2007, the World Bank (2007a), provides the – to date – most comprehensive report on the agricultural sector and suggests reforms:

“The rationale for the recommended reforms of public policies and institutions concerned with livestock production is the same as in other sectors: withdrawing from roles and activities which the private sector can do and focusing on those that the private sector cannot perform” (World Bank 2007a: 78).

Donor organizations have also criticized the government’s agricultural policy for incoherence, for example, the government’s programs for animal breeding or fodder production. The World Bank criticizes the scope,<sup>20</sup> pace and strategy of many government programs and finds ineffective use of limited resources, for a too broad range of activities and with a false perception of agricultural sector clients – who are no longer a few hundred agricultural producers, but tens of thousands of smallholders (World Bank 2007a). Donors also believe that piecemeal policy design hinders private sector development:

“Despite market-oriented reforms, the state continues to announce *ad hoc* interventions in commodity markets as a means of supporting agricultural producers, creating uncertainty and unrealistic expectations among market participants and stifling private initiative” (IMF and World Bank 2006: 10).

Hence, donors have recommended a focus on what they see as the most important agricultural services<sup>21</sup> – land administration, irrigation services and rural financial services:

“A large agenda for further reforms would include developing capacity for appropriate and effective agricultural policy formulations, ensuring that all farm land holders have proper title to land and that the water code is implemented, as well as taking actions to increase access to market-based rural credit” (IMF and World Bank 2006: 10).

### 2.3.2 *Distribution of tasks and responsibilities as a result of decentralization*

The following section aims to apply the framework developed in Section 2.2 to the study case. This section has two parts. First, based on the 21 legal acts identified in Section 2.2.3, it describes the transfer of *responsibilities and tasks* for the provision of general and agricultural services from central government to municipality-level actors (2.3.2.1). Second, it summarizes – also based on a legal review – the transfer of different types of *power* (see Section 2.2.1.2 for a

---

<sup>20</sup>The World Bank criticizes the government’s engagement in agricultural services which the World Bank considers better provided by private suppliers – for example, breeding and fodder production.

<sup>21</sup>The same document emphasizes veterinary services and machinery services.

definition of those types of powers) to municipality-level actors (2.3.2.2 - 2.3.2.4).

### 2.3.2.1 The transfer of responsibilities to municipality-level actors

At the time of data collection, which started with a first visit to the country in December 2007 and continued intermittently until December 2010, responsibilities for rural public and agricultural services were confusing. The legal document relevant then was the law *On Local Self-government and Local State Administration* of 2002, with amendments from 2008. The law transfers the responsibility for a large number of tasks from the central government to municipalities. The scope of tasks is impressive: the law outlines 25 “issues of local significance” put “under the jurisdiction of a Local Self-government” (Article 18):

“The following issues of local significance shall be under the jurisdiction of a local government for it to organize functioning and developing a system of life support on a territory, social and economic planning and providing social and cultural services to the population: 1) ensuring economic development of a relevant territory; 2) municipal property management; 3) formation, approval and execution of a local budget; 4) provision of drinking water to people; 5) facilitating operation of sewage system and treatment facilities in settlements; 6) facilitating municipal roads functioning in settlements; 7) organization of common use area lighting; 8) facilitating cemeteries functioning and providing ritual services; 9) territory improvement and greenery of common use areas; 10) facilitating parks, sport facilities and recreation ground functioning; 11) waste management; 12) facilitating municipal transport functioning and public transport operation regulation within the boundaries of settlements; 13) protecting cultural and historical sights of local significance; 14) organization and support of local libraries operation; 15) establishing land use and development rules for a relevant territory of a settlement; 16) posting advertisements on the territory of a settlement in accordance with laws of the Kyrgyz Republic; 17) supporting protection of public order; 18) creating conditions for folk art, creative activity development; 19) creating conditions to spend leisure time; 20) organization of activities on working with children and young people; 21) providing conditions to develop physical culture and mass sports; 22) promoting prevention and liquidation of extraordinary situation consequences; 23) organization of heating support on a relevant territory” (GKR law *On Local Self-government and Local Self-Administration*, amended version of 2002; Article 18).

Among the so-called “issues of local significance” transferred to municipality administrations, only two are specific agricultural services. First, the management of municipal property, including agricultural land and pasture; second, the establishment and design of land use and land development rules.

There are a number of additional agricultural services in the same law classified as “state authorities”:

“... 10) allocation and use of the Agricultural Land Redistribution Pool<sup>22</sup>; 11) summarizing material on perspective of development of agricultural production, making economic forecasts of agricultural production; 12) assisting in taking timely veterinary and sanitary and anti-epidemic efforts, as well as pedigree and selection efforts in animal husbandry”; [and] 13) taking appropriate efforts related to fighting the damage caused to agricultural crops, protecting harvest, forest shelter belts and forestland.” (Art 20, Para. 6)

According to the law, these “state authorities”

“can be delegated [to the local government] only in such cases when the state along with state authority delegation, shall provide for earmarked transfers from the republican budget to a local budget, or determine other sources of financing, required for delegated state authority execution.” (Art. 20, Para. 3)

The law allows further transfer of these tasks to other “legal entities and individuals” by an “executive administrative body of local government as agreed with the local *kenesh*.” (Art. 20, Para. 2) However, the distribution of functions is optional and the wording does not provide for transparent allocation of tasks. Task specifications lack and ambiguous formulations like “facilitating,” “organization,” “ensuring,” or “support” are characteristic for the document.

The most comprehensive information on the distribution of agricultural service tasks is the 2004 resolution of the Kyrgyz Government titled *Agrarian Policy Concept until 2010*. The document generally emphasises the government’s support for private sector development in agriculture:

“The Government should promote setting up of private agrochemical and agro-technical services countrywide, ensure unhampered sale of mineral fertilizers, chemicals, pesticides, agricultural tools and spare parts to the agricultural machinery. For that purpose machine-tractor workshops, warehouses and other material and technical resources available in the Republic should be used.” (GKR 2004 :18).

The document also lists prioritized agricultural services, which include pasture management, advisory services, market information services to rural producers and veterinary services.<sup>23</sup>

Like most of the Kyrgyz decentralization legislation, the *Agrarian Policy Concept until 2010*, avoids a clear distribution of functions. The document lists different potential service providers to whom planning, management, provision

---

<sup>22</sup>Elsewhere called “Land Redistribution Fund”

<sup>23</sup>The diverse priorities for agricultural sector development found in the policy and donor documents suggest that prior to the introduction of the World Bank’s Agricultural and Services Investment Project in mid-2008, which started with a focus on pasture management and rural advisory, there was no commonly agreed focus for agricultural sector development among donors and government.

and monitoring have been assigned: the state, private service providers, service users, and donors. However, vague formulations, coupled with duplicate responsibilities, are frequent. The prescribed distribution of agricultural service tasks is found in Table 2-7 to 2-10 and, in a simplified version in the following Table 2-5.

Generally speaking, the government follows donors' recommendations for economic liberalization. The simplified outline of tasks in the following table shows that the government sees the state's role in service planning and monitoring, while service provision is considered as the responsibility of various actors. Agricultural services, unlike the Soviet period, are mainly paid by service users.

The document is full of ambiguities. It defines providers for some services, but gives little information on planning and financing. Services such as veterinary and quarantine, breeding, machinery services, seed breeding, chemical input provision, land administration and agricultural education are allocated to what the authors of the document call "the state" and to other providers at the same time. The authors make no specific statements on which administrative levels are actually responsible for "state" services. In case of duplicate responsibility, it is not clear who holds which specific role. As a consequence, the document also provides no information on the role of municipality-level administrations in agricultural service provision.

**Table 2-5: Authority for agricultural service domains according to Agrarian Policy Concept 2004**

Service	Service planning and management	Responsible for service provision	Payment for service use	Monitoring
Veterinary services	S	S/P (S)	U	S
Quarantine	S	S (S)	..	S
Breeding	-	P/S/D	S/D	S
Water and irrigation management	-	U	U/D/S	S
Machinery services	-	P	U	-
Seed breeding	S	S/ P (S)	..	S



Agro-chemicals	-	P/S (S)	-	S
Rural advisory services	S	D	U	-
Land administration	-	S	U	-
Agricultural education	-	S/D/NGO (S/D)	-	-
Rural financial services	-	P (U/D)	S	-
Marketing and market information	-	NGO (U/D)	-	-

Source: Information summarized from Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010

S = State; P = Private service providers; U = Service users; D = Donors; – = not specified in the Agrarian Policy Concept

### 2.3.2.2 The transfer of power and rights to municipality-level actors

To make decentralization meaningful, authority needs to be accompanied by rights to independently execute tasks. Kyrgyz decentralization legislation has, besides transferring service provision *responsibilities*, provided for a transfer of powers to actors at municipality level – including Local Self-governments, community-based organizations, but also individual citizens.

To explore which powers were formally transferred to whom, I reviewed the statements on power transfers found in each of the most important legal acts that were shown in Table 2-4 in Section 2.2.3.1. Based on this information, I identified which municipality-level actor group received which type of power according to the classification in Section 2.2.1.2. The findings are summarized in Table 2-6 below.

### 2.3.2.3 The right to contribute to collective decisions and the right to information

Municipality actors have received the *right to contribute to collective decisions and information*. During decentralization, municipality citizens received the democratic right to contribute to collective decisions by voting. Most important is the active and passive right to elect heads of municipality administrations and members of municipality councils. Such citizens' rights to impact decisions

gradually evolved: until 1995 heads of municipality administrations were appointed by district administrations; in 1996 elections for municipality governments – municipality councils and heads of municipality administrations – were introduced.

By law, the municipality councils (*aiyl kenesh*) are the most powerful bodies at municipality level because they are the “main controlling representative body of local government” (Karashev and Tarbinski 2002: 111). They approve the head of the municipality and can revoke his/her decisions, determine differentiated land tax rates, define the land rental process for hayfields and did this, prior to the law *On Pastures* in 2009, also for municipality pastures. They also approve the staff of the municipal administration. The head of the municipality administration is therefore accountable to the municipality council. Municipality councils also have the right to request information on activities and budget decisions of the rural administration (Karashev and Trabinski 2002: 75).

Citizens received rights to form interest groups and fora to influence decisions taken by the elected municipality councils. The 2002 law *On Local Self-government and Local State Administration*) and the 2005 law *On Jamaats* give citizens the right to independently form community-based groups, such as traditional elders’ groups, women’s associations or condominium associations. In addition, they acquired the right to hold citizen meetings which are entitled to make recommendations to municipality councils (Grävingholt et al. 2006).

The law grants economic autonomy to community-based groups by giving them the right to own property and managing their own budgets without state intervention. As shown in the following sections, NGOs and donor organizations have used such groups as anchors for municipality-level programs and have formed such groups to allocate funds directly to municipality-level actors.

#### 2.3.2.4 The allocation of new property rights

Municipality actors – Local Self-governments, rural citizens and community-based organizations – have acquired *new property rights*. Decentralization has given municipality-level actors new rights to own physical assets and financial resources. Citizens received full private property rights to land, including the right to sell and purchase agricultural and non-agricultural land. Local Self-governments received property rights to important physical resources, including local infrastructure, buildings, agricultural and non-agricultural land as well as pastures.

In the following section, I summarize the most important property rights municipality administrations received. According to the law *On municipal property* (2005), they were declared owners of municipal property, which includes:

- The local infrastructure, including structures for transport, energy supply, water supply, the sewage system, and communications;

- non-privatized commercial buildings, streets, bridges and local roads;
- public parks and land allocated for parks, forestry, historical monuments and cultural landmarks;
- forests and agricultural land, lakes, sources of water, and local deposits of mineral resources, given that those lands are not defined as public natural resources; and
- unclaimed land.

Local governments received the right to lease this municipal property. While this regulation formally created a potential source of budget revenue, there are no clear regulations for leasing. Hence, the poorly trained municipality administrators cannot make the best use of these revenue resources. Hence, leasing practice is *ad hoc* and intransparent. Observers report many cases where use rights to municipality property are allocated without formal rental agreements or any payment at all (Mukanova 2008).

As mentioned above, agricultural land became property of the municipality administrations. During the 1990s, land and buildings previously managed by collective and state farms were distributed to the population. 20 to 25% of the agricultural areas were not distributed to the population, but transformed into a so-called “Land Redistribution Fund”, which came under municipal authority.

According to the *Land Code* of 1999 (amended 2003), the municipality administration can lease such land plots to citizens. According to the law, the municipality council can set a local land *lease* rate – land *tax* rates are defined by the central government. While leasing out municipal property has generally not increased budget revenues, leasing out agricultural land is currently among the most important revenue sources for municipality budgets.

Besides, municipality administrations have gained property rights to vast pasture areas. According to the 2002 pasture regulations), municipalities held management rights over the nearest pastures, which are usually used for winter forage only. The 2009 law *On Pastures* extended municipality authority also to pastures used during spring, autumn and summer. It thereby gave municipalities “responsibility for management” (Art. 1, Para. 1) and “pasture use authority” (Art. 1, Para. 2) and thereby deprived the previously responsible district and regional state administrations of their management rights and the right to revenues from leasing out these pasture areas (for further details on the pasture law see Chapter 4, Chapter 5, and Chapter 6). In most cases, the municipality administrations transferred these management rights to community-based organizations, called “Pasture Committees”.

In addition, municipality administrations have received greater budget autonomy. The *Tax Code* (1996), the law *On Fiscal and Economic Basis of Local Self-governance* (2003) and the law *On Basic Principles of Budgetary Rights* (1998) introduced amendments in interbudgetary relations that allow

establishment of an independently managed municipal budget. According to the *Tax Code* of 1996 (and following amendments) and the law *On Fiscal and Economic Basis of Local Self-government* of 2004, revenue sources consist of 8 local taxes<sup>24</sup> and a number of fees<sup>25</sup> and shares of national taxes – which include property tax and the land tax,<sup>26</sup> as well as budgetary transfers from the central government. Surplus from these revenues remains with the municipality governments. Among these taxes, land tax, which is fixed by the government, is the most important revenue source.

“There are two sources of land tax – the tax for individual plots of land paid by owners and the tax for leasing state land. The state land share is about 20 percent after the intense privatization of land. This 20 percent of land is the source for local land tax generation. [The] LSG [(Local Self-government)] is allowed to let these lands, and rent payment is to be accumulated in a special LSG treasury account. The share of income generated from land leasing is 7 to 10 percent, on average” (Mukanova 2008: 237).

In addition, rules were introduced to prevent regional and district administrations from reducing transfers from the central to the municipal budget. The national budget of 2007, which has the status of a law, introduced simplified budget transfer rules. Prior to 2007, national tax and budget support for local administrative bodies was channelled from the central government, the Ministry of Finance specifically, through the regional and district administrations. The reform of 2007 eliminated transfer through regional and district administrations and introduced a procedure according to which regions, districts and municipalities receive direct payments from the republican government, which reduces municipality-level dependence on intermediary administrations.

At the time of data collection, the first experiences with direct budget transfers between the Ministry of Finance and the municipality administrations had been made. UNDP staff considered the budgetary impacts very positive:

“[T]en, twelve municipalities worked directly with the Ministry of Finance. ... [W]hen more authority was given to the municipalities, in terms of collection of, for example, local taxes and fees, they showed better results. Those municipalities showed very good

---

<sup>24</sup>Mukanova (2008) indicates the following taxes as local taxes and fees: resort tax, tax on advertising, charge for parking, charge for garbage disposal, hotel tax, tax on vehicle owners, tax on sales and retail trade, tax on real estate. Regulated taxes (100% transferred to local budget revenues): unified tax on small entrepreneurs, receipts from mandatory patenting, income tax on patent basis, income tax charged by tax authorities

<sup>25</sup>State duty, administrative fees, confiscation of derelict property, charges of traffic police, deposit amounts, unclaimed cargo, license issuance fees.

<sup>26</sup>Local taxes and revenue sources refer to locally collected payments which fully enter the municipality budget. National taxes are collected by state tax bodies and shares of the collected amounts are transferred back to those municipalities where the taxes were collected.

results and collected twice the income or revenues in comparison with the previous years. So we can say these are very good results” (Interview UNDP Decentralization Expert).

The right to collect and distribute benefits from local taxes, including the power to decide about how local budgets are spent, greatly improved municipalities’ independence. However, tax collection challenges, such as the unclear competencies of state tax collectors and municipality-level tax inspectors, lack of basic competencies and information among administrative staff, but also discretionary interference of district and regional administrations in local tax affairs, have not been solved (UNDP and GKR 2005) and are, according to interview partners, likely to persist:

“... [T]hese district structures<sup>27</sup> no longer have the right to influence the municipalities’ budgets but nevertheless it’s a tradition for years and they got used to this and they, of course, will continue to control the municipality budgets!” (Interview UNDP Decentralization Expert).

At the time of data collection, the future of the simplified direct tax transfer to municipality administrations was unclear. A new tax code was under review by government and parliament. According to the interviewed experts, this new code was considered to allow too little local tax revenues. In addition, statements by leading politicians in favour of re-introducing district-level authority over municipality budgets, which would lead to a three-level interbudgetary transfer, as well as announcements by the president to abandon the election of municipality heads for the next two years, made experts pessimistic about the future of independent municipality budgets (Interview UNDP Decentralization Expert).

The second important recipient of new property rights are community-based organizations. The law *On Jamaats* (2005) grants these groups independent budgets and specifies the right to autonomously receive and use funds from donor organizations. This law and the law *On Associations of Water Users (WUAs)* as well as the 2009 law *On Pastures*, gave community-based organizations the possibility to receive property rights to natural resources and important infrastructure. However, these rights depend on the voluntary transfer of irrigation management and pasture management authority from municipality administrations to community-based organizations. Once holding authority, community-based organizations can earn revenue from allocating use rights to resource users.

---

<sup>27</sup>Refers to Local State Administration at district (rayon) level.

### 2.3.2.5 Rights to allocate property rights and other benefits

The allocation of management rights to property and increased autonomy to use tax income has greatly increased the ability of municipality actors to direct benefit streams from these resources.

First, the new land administration legislation gave Local Self-governments the right to distribute benefits from natural resource use. As mentioned above, Local Self-governments received the right to issue certificates for land plots (1996) and rights to the administration of land (1999) and to lease land from the land redistribution fund. They thereby determine who receives access to agricultural land.

Second, the law *On Pastures* formally gives Local Self-government bodies the power to allocate usufruct rights to large pasture areas. Pasture management authority was transferred from district and regional authorities to municipality administrations. However, these rights are often not executed by Local Self-governments, as they usually transfer them to community-based organizations, so-called “Pasture User Unions” (PUU).

Third, Local Self-governments received the right to independently allocate municipality-level budgets for service planning/provision and infrastructure development. This includes the right to design rules for payment and use of services. Municipality administrations thereby control access to services. However, authority over service provision is often also a burden to the municipality administration, because the available budget does not allow to provide even the most necessary services to residents or to prevent further decay of much of the service infrastructure.

Fourth, formally, Local Self-governments have received the right to staff municipality administrations and have thereby gained the right to allocate salaries to chosen individuals. Some Local Self-governments could, as Mukanova’s data (Mukanova 2008: 265-266) suggest, determine the structure of their own departments and could also, without interference from the district and regional LSA levels, decide about the administrative staff they hire. In rural Kyrgyzstan, where regular off-farm income is very rare, this is a powerful resource. However, Local Self-governments can often not use this power, as the municipality budgets cannot even cover staff salaries and the most important local services. In effect the lack of funds makes Local Self-governments in many cases fully dependent on donors and the government.

The second group which benefited greatly from decentralization by receiving power to allocate benefits are agricultural community-based organizations: decentralization laws – and also specific agricultural laws, such as the Water Code and the law *On Pastures* established the right of citizens to form interest groups. Those community-based organizations have received the right to manage own budgets, for example funds acquired from donor organizations (which the law explicitly mentions). Community-based organizations (water user associations

and pasture user associations)<sup>28</sup> have thereby received significant power for fund management and distribution of rights to the use important resources to agricultural community-based organizations. These organizations also receive the right to manage and use the resources and relevant infrastructure. This bundle of rights has given them substantial influence. They can allocate access to irrigation and pastures and set and collect usage fees for irrigation water and pasture use, using the proceeds for maintenance and infrastructure development as well as payment of own staff.

---

<sup>28</sup> Drinking water user associations were found to hold similar rights in practice. However, the legislation was not reviewed.

**Table 2-6: Transfer of formal decision power to municipality-level actors based on decentralization legislation (1990-2009)**

Year	Legal act <sup>1</sup>	Allocation of new property rights to...	Right to distribute benefits from resources or services to...	Right to participate in collective decision making to...	Right to information
1990	Law <i>On Local Self-governance</i>				Local council*
1991	Law <i>On Local Self-government in the Kyrgyz Republic</i> *			Local governments* <sup>2</sup>	
	Decree <i>On Peasant Farms</i>	Citizens			
	Land Code		Local council*		
1992	Presidential decree <i>On Local Self-government and Local Self-administration</i>	Private	Rural* committee		
1993	Constitution			Local governments*	
1994	Series of presidential decrees <i>On Measures to Enhance the Land and Agrari-</i>	Private	Municipality administration*		

<sup>1</sup> Summary of key content of these laws and regulations in Table 2-4.

<sup>2</sup> \* Preceding organizations of current municipality administrations (*Aiyl okrug*) and municipality councils (*Aiyl kenesh*)



*an Reform in the Kyrgyz Republic* (additional  
land decrees in 1995, 1996)

1996	Presidential Decree	Municipality administration	Municipality administration	Citizens	
	Tax Code (numerous amendments)	Municipality administration	Municipality administration		
1998	Constitutional amendment	Private			
	<i>Law On Basic Principles of Budget Management in the Kyrgyz Republic</i> (amended 2009)	Municipality administration	Municipality administration		
1999	Land Code (amended in 2001 and 2003 )	Municipality administration; Private (2001)	Municipality administration; Private (2001)		
	Presidential decree			Municipality council	Municipality council
2002	<i>Law On Unions (Associations) of Water Users</i>	Community- based organization	Community- based organization	Community- based organization	Private
	<i>Law On Local Self-government and Local State Administration</i> , January (amendments in 2005 and 2006)			Private; Community- based organization	

	<i>Law On Pasture Lease and Use</i>	Municipality administration; Private	Municipality administrations		
	<i>Law On Communal Ownership of Property</i>	Municipality administration	Municipality administration		
2003	<i>Law On Financial and Economic Basis of Local Self-government</i>	Municipality administration	Municipality administration		Municipality council
2004	<i>Law On Municipal Service</i>	Municipality administrations			
	<i>Water Code</i>	Municipality administration	Community- based organization	Private	Private
	<i>Agrarian Policy Concept until 2010</i>		Municipality administration; Private; Community- based organization		

2005	<i>Law On Jamaats<sup>3</sup> (Communities) and their Associations</i>	Community-based organization	Community-based organization	Community-based organization	Community-based organization
	<i>Law On Municipal Property</i>	Municipality administration	Municipality administration		
2007	Constitution				
	<i>Law On Republican Budget for 2007<sup>4</sup></i>	Municipality administration	Municipality administration		
2008	Presidential decree		Limitation of rights of municipality administration		
	<i>Amendments to Law On Local Self-government and Local State Administration 2002</i>		Municipality administration	Municipality administration	
2009	<i>Law On Pastures</i>	Municipality administration	Community-based organization	Private	Private

Source: Review of legal provisions from Table 2-4: according to classification of power types in Section 2.2.1.2.

<sup>3</sup> *Jamaat* is translated as ‘community’ and refers to “a form of organisation in local self-governance for joint responsible decision-making on local issues based on voluntary association of members of local community residing in one street, block or other territory of a village or town” (*Law On Jamaats and their Associations*, Article 1).

<sup>4</sup> The annual state budget has the status of a law (Liebert and Tiulegenov 2013: 86) and is issued each year. The 2007 budget is specific, as it grants municipality administrations the right to generate own revenues and draft own budgets.

### 2.3.3 Accountability relationships among the different actor groups

The following section provides findings from the literature and interview transcripts about accountability relationships between the actor groups identified in Section 2.3.1. It reviews who is accountable to whom and the relevant accountability mechanism. Note that most information is based on two available empirical studies on municipality-level government in the Kyrgyz Republic (Grävingholt et al. 2006; Mukanova 2008). In addition, I used complementary information from other sources, such as donor reports or other gray literature. Those documents usually lack a description of methods for data generation and interpretation and can therefore be only understood as its authors' perception. If I have used information from those sources it has been marked as such.

#### 2.3.3.1 Local state administration and central government

Many observers of the post-independence Kyrgyz administration find that decentralization has neither effectively redistributed administrative powers, nor impacted accountability relationships. It is a widespread belief that the move towards democratic decentralization has remained formal:

“The introduction of liberal economic policies, the relatively vibrant civil society, and a less authoritarian political climate than in the rest of Central Asia even merited the country the label of ‘Central Asia's island of democracy.’ Thus, on the surface, the Kyrgyz state looked rather impressive. ... [B]eneath the formal structures the actual political situation was never as bright as suggested by official directives and international proclamations” (Engval 2007: 36).

Some observers see all executive, legislative and judicative powers in the hands of the president (Dukenbayev and Hansen 2003; Engwal 2007). Reportedly, decentralization had had not no impact on the lack of society's control over the president:

“The following features of Soviet administration are still extant in the current public administration of Kyrgyzstan: 1. A high degree of centralization and state involvement in regulations of nearly all processes in society; 2. The accumulation and concentration of power in the hands of the President and state bureaucracy; 3. A limited parliament and weak judiciary system; 4. Underdeveloped and weak local government; 5. A command-type, top-to-bottom style of management; 6. The absence of a professional civil service system based on internationally recognized standards” (Dukenbaev and Hansen 2003: 34-35).

Also, has upward accountability remained high. Regional and district administrations, summarized as local state administration (LSA), are considered subdivisions of government and fully dependent on the president. By directly appointing administrative heads at district level (called *akhim*) and at regional level (called *governor*) and by tight budget control, the presidential apparatus

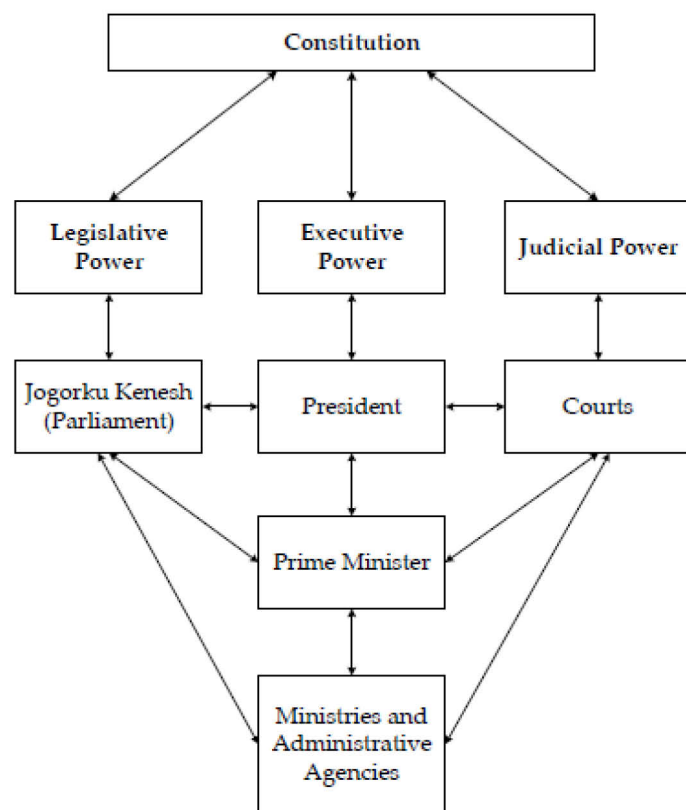
holds all levels of administration fully accountable (Alymkulov and Kulatov 2002; Dukenbayev 2004; Libman 2008; Liebert and Tiulegenov 2013; Mukanova 2008; Works 2002):

“There is high pressure on the local self-administrations to perform the transferred tasks as they have to fear job loss” (Mukanova 2008, 217).

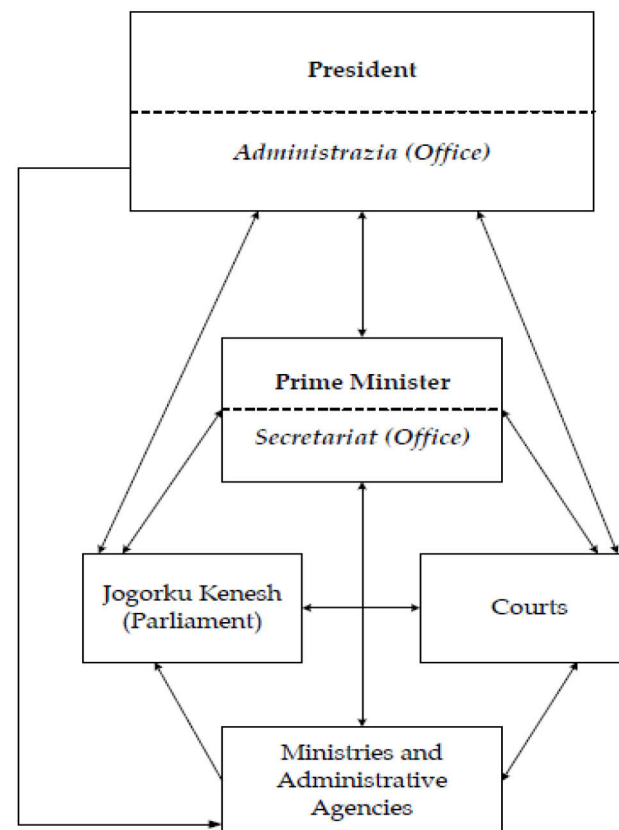
Downward accountability, in contrast, has not increased. The Central Government does not endow LSAs with clear procedural rules, responsibilities and resources. Hence, LSA staff face (i) unclear competencies and distribution of tasks; (ii) unclear accountability relationships between departments and administrative bodies; (iii) inadequate allocation of tasks, resources and staff; (iv) frequent task duplication. This leads to high dependency of lower administrative branches on governmental orders and lack of transparency, which enables inaccurate use of public resources (Baimyrzaeva 2010, Mukanova 2008).

**Figure 2-4: Formal and informal governance structure**

## Formal governance structure



## Informal governance structure



Source: Dukenbayev and Hansen 2003: 50 and 52

### 2.3.3.2 State administration and citizens

There is ambiguous evidence on the relationship between the presidential apparatus and parliament as representative of the citizenry. Most observers suggest that central government and LSAs are not accountable to citizens: corruption in the administration and in business has reached extraordinary levels (Engval 2007; Martini 2013; Transparency International 2015). Kyrgyzstan in 2008 ranked 166<sup>th</sup>, in 2009 162<sup>th</sup> and in 2010 164<sup>th</sup> out of 176 countries in the Global Corruption Index (Transparency International 2015). A national opinion poll by Transparency International found:

“72% of the citizens interviewed ... reported that corruption is a big issue for the country. For 36%, corruption is seen as the second most important issue faced by the country...” (Martini 2013: 4).

The reason is seen in lacking mechanisms for monitoring government and administrations:

“[t]he government provides very limited information to the public on the budget process, making it almost impossible for citizens to hold government accountable for its management of public resources” (Martini 2013: 4).

Public frustration with drastic cases of corruption, combined with increasing public service costs, has threatened the country's social peace. The collapses of two post-independence governments also suggest insufficient ability to serve citizens. There is great dissatisfaction with use of resources and increasing levels of corruption.

The literature also suggests the persistence of a “Soviet mentality” (Grävingholt et al. 2006: 9 f; Karashev and Tarbinski 2002: 112): non-democratic mind-sets, unrestricted obedience to authorities, little interest in collective action and participation in democratic collective activities. According to the authors, these are further obstacles to democratic control.

Once elected, there might be very little control of members of parliament. Pétric (2005) reports the efforts of parliamentary candidates to please their electorates:

“Politicians must have an important local stronghold to ensure popular support. The democratization [of] political life ... reinforces clientelistic practices and the activity of informal solidarity networks; one of the campaign leaders of a member of parliament of the region of Naryn confided that ‘I often come during the summer to maintain relations with the people here, you need to give time, to eat and drink with people ... I also finance the construction of a monument, during the summer we organize equestrian games with prizes, we help the school too. You have to give in order to obtain people's trust’” (Pétric 2005: 325).

Pétric (2005) observed that parliamentary candidates are motivated by their own and their clienteles' economic interests. Ideology or party membership do not seem to play a relevant role. Instead, parliamentarians mainly seek to secure economic benefits of their solidarity networks which "rest upon complex relations that link individuals through personal bounds (friendships, kinship ties, matrimonial alliances, professional bounds, etc.) of patronage" (Pétric 2005: 325).

### 2.3.3.3 Local Self-government and different levels of state administration

Despite their formal autonomy, municipalities are upwardly accountable to the state. Mukanova (2008), reporting on data collected prior to fiscal decentralization, states:

"Appointed mayors have dual loyalties, and typically are less responsive to local needs. Directly elected AO [municipality administrations'] heads ideally should have the strongest degree of autonomy, derived from the electoral mandate. However, they also depend a lot on the LSA and report to it for execution of presidential and governmental resolutions, resolutions of ministries, and for functions shared with the state." (Mukanova 2008: 226)

Due to very limited empirical research, there is not much information on how the municipality level is actually accountable to other administrative levels. An UNDP report claims that the government's staff directly control municipality-level use of funds through personal supervision and observation (UNDP and GKR 2005). In 2007, new "interbudgetary relations" were introduced. Since then, Local Self-governments receive funds directly from the Ministry of Finance. This measure was intended to reduce district (*rayon*) and region (*oblast*) administrations' illegitimate reduction of funds for municipality-level administrations, but the direct budget relations between the central government and Local Self-governments clearly increased their subordination.

### 2.3.3.4 Elected councils at municipality level and municipality-level administration

Elected councils operate at two levels: district level and municipality level. Both are formally part of the local self-governance structures. Contrary to formal prescriptions – but typical for the entire region, as shown in the following quote – these councils do not possess any power to control executive bodies (Grävingholt et al. 2006, Mukanova 2008):

"From the point of view of *formal decentralization*, all countries of the region are unitary and have a multi-level administrative system, inherited from the Soviet past. ... The heads of local administration are appointed by the central government; the *governors* ... act as representatives of the president and heads of regional executive [...]. There are local elected councils at provincial and sub-provincial level (*maslikhat* in Kazakhstan,



local councils in Uzbekistan, *madzhilis* in Tajikistan, *gengesh* in Turkmenistan and *kenesh* in Kyrgyz Republic), which are, however, virtually powerless and often dominated by the executive...” (Libman 2008, Section 4.2) (*Italics in original*).

The local councillors are badly informed about their rights and, even if they have received external training, are rarely able to pressure the municipality or district administration (Grävingholt et al. 2006; Mukanova 2008).

### 2.3.3.5 Municipality-level Local Self-government and citizens

Since independence, the heads of the municipality-level administration (*aiyl okmotu*) – in other words the mayor – and the municipality councils (*aiyl kenesh*) have been elected twice. The open and seemingly fair elections reportedly did not ensure full accountability of municipal administrations and councils to citizens (Karashev and Tarbinski 2002; Mukanova 2008). The reason is seen in lacking compliance with democratic principles:

“Due to such situation the government (both representatives and executive authorities) is still non-transparent for the population. The population still does not realize the essence of government and does not comprehend that it is the people who are the main sources of governmental authorities and local government performance. On the other hand, the governmental authorities themselves still cannot realize and admit that their main objective is rendering services to [the] population” (Karashev and Tarbinski 2002: 112).

The role of the municipality councils is very problematic. For lack of training and information on their role, facilities for open meetings (Karashev and Tarbinski 2002) and financial compensation for their work (Mukanova 2008: 211), they fail to control the local executive, are not accountable to citizens and tend to use their positions for their own benefit.

There are different views on the relationship between municipality administrations and the population: while most authors are very critical of the accountability of local municipalities and even describe the government as “isolated” from the population (Karashev and Tarbinski 2002: 112), a closer look at Mukanova’s data shows that citizens frequently approach municipality administrations about daily problems, and that the vast majority have received at least some support (Mukanova 2008).

### 2.3.3.6 Government and donors

Even though some authors consider donors very powerful actors who impact policy choices, it seems that, donors have little influence on the implementation of policies. Besides, policy formulation, based on donor recommendations, is often not specific (task formulation, functional differentiation, etc.), not funded and not supported by the government (UNECE 2009). Grävingholt et al. (2008: 8) call this the governments’s “unwillingness” to implement the new regula-

tions. The low impact donors have on the government might also be shown by the withdrawal of many donors from several policy fields – including decentralization (Asian Development Bank 2012).

## 2.4 Impact of decentralization on agricultural service provision in Kyrgyzstan

I have already outlined general public service responsibilities and specific agricultural public service responsibilities which were decentralized to the municipality level. This section aims to summarize the literature about the impact of decentralization on service provision at *municipality level*. The only study on municipality-level service provision is the extensively cited Local Self-government study by Mukanova (2008). Mukanova has shown that most of the public service functions to be performed by Local Self-governments are not executed:

“[M]ost of those [delegated] functions, due to lack of capacity, low staff capability, and lack of funds, are unperformed, and ... many of the functions are technically and operationally complex and even their delivery-provision is not feasible for regional subdivisions of the ministries and agencies themselves. The provision of those service delivery functions requires professional, appropriate institutional capacity and organization, clear sets of rules and regulations, and many other things that are unavailable to the current LSG [(Local Self-government)] system” (Mukanova 2008: 215).

Hence, most services are provided only on an *ad hoc* basis, depending on donor or governmental support (Mukanova 2008):

“... [V]illage governments are able to perform a maximum of three to four functions out of 11 assigned. They are few communal services that can be financed through local taxes. Other functions are performed from time to time when external resources are available through grants of the international community (USAID-funded ARIS program, UNDP, WB Rural Investment Project) or charitable donation of citizens. Some functions (social protection, employment and migration program, public order) are performed by regional subdivisions of the ministry (efficiency of which is a question mark), and subsequently financed out of the budget of the ministry. Even when they are financed through the republican (ministry) budget, only the so-called “protected line items” – payroll and social tax – are covered. The efficiency of service provision was not achieved by the *ad hoc* transfer of technical functions to LSGs since little attention was paid to the organizational coherence of LSGs and ministries” (Mukanova 2008: 216).

I will not explore general service provision in the remaining section because Mukanova (2008) has discussed service provision outcomes in great detail. This review focuses on agricultural service provision at municipality level, which – despite the importance of agriculture for the country’s economic development – to date has been largely ignored in the literature. It is therefore of interest to study how decentralization has impacted those agricultural services previously

provided by the state or produced as part of the Soviet agricultural administration. I therefore reviewed the available information on: (i) the direction of reforms in that sector; (ii) the allocation of service provision tasks; and (ii) the status – or outcomes – of the reform.

At the time the review was conducted, scientific literature was available only for irrigation services. I therefore also reviewed gray literature, which consists almost entirely of donor reports. Before I discuss service provision, a short introduction to the general transformation of agricultural structures in Kyrgyzstan after the disintegration of the Soviet Union is required.

**Figure 2-5: Accountability relationship**

	Local state administration (LSA)	Local Self- government (LSG)	Donors (D)	Citizens (C)
Central gov- ernment (CG)	<b>LSA accounta- ble to CG</b>	<b>LSG accountable to CG</b>	<b>CG (not) ac- countable to D</b>	<b>C not accountable to CG</b>
	<i>No information</i>	<b>CG not accounta- ble to LSG</b>	<b>D not accounta- ble to CG</b>	<b>CG not accounta- ble to C</b>
Local state administration (LSA)		<b>LSG accountable to LSA</b>	<i>No information</i>	<b>C accountable to LSA</b>
		<b>LSA not account- able to LSG</b>	<i>No information</i>	<b>LSA not account- able to C</b>
Local Self- government (LSG)			<b>LSG accounta- ble to D</b>	<i>No information</i>
			<b>D not accounta- ble to LSG</b>	<i>No information</i>
Donors (D)				<b>C accountable to D</b>
				<b>D not accountable to C</b>

#### 2.4.1 Agricultural reforms

Decentralization affected the entire agricultural sector. The dissolution of all public farms – collective farms (*kolkhoz*) and state farms (*sovkhos*) – led to a massive shift of property rights to land from public to private owners and also – as the *kolkhoz* had important administrative and economic roles (Baimyrzaeva 2005) – to the extinction of important rural services.

The land reform started in 1991. Soviet state and collective farms were dismantled and shares of land, equipment and buildings were distributed to those who previously worked on the farms. The restructuring of collective and state farms was almost completed in 1997 (Crewett 2003; Mudahar 1998). Among the Central Asian states, Kyrgyzstan realized the fastest, most liberal land reform:

“The pace and depth of land reform in Kyrgyzstan was the most aggressive in Central Asia .... In February 1991, the Kyrgyz government passed laws that allowed local councils to create peasant farms. And by 1994, approximately 10,000 private farms were created, leading up to the ‘watershed’ year, between 1994-1995, when the Kyrgyz government aggressively distributed farmland to all household types. Although holdings were initially considered to be leased for 99-year periods, this approach was replaced by outright ownership in 1998” (Light 2007: 10-11).

The land reform led to a drastic reorganization of the agricultural sector: in seven years the number of large collective and state farms decreased from about 500 to 22 (Figure 2-6). Since then, more than 52,000 farms emerged, among them 672 newly formed collectives (Mudahar 1998).

With the dissolution of the state and collective farms and the abolishment of the entire Soviet agricultural system, central management of the agricultural production chains, including administration, input provision, processing and marketing, broke down. Therefore, the government set the (re-)establishment of agricultural services as a key priority. Two key policy documents illustrated this interest: the already discussed *Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010* and the *Country Development Strategy* (2006).

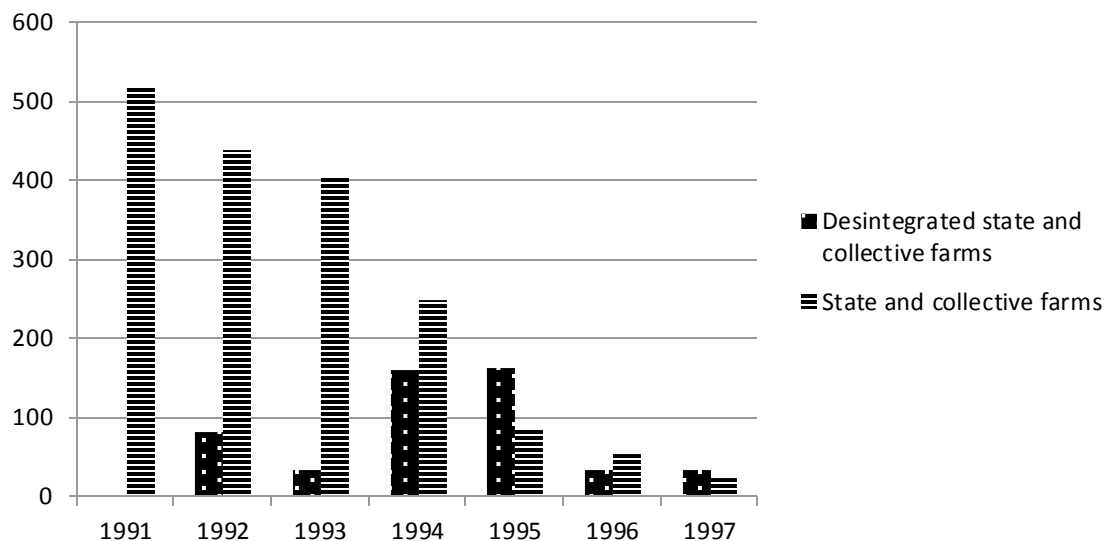
#### 2.4.2 Impact on agricultural service provision

At the time of data collection, donors and the government had different perceptions of those agricultural services needing most urgent improvement. The government’s Agrarian Policy Concept emphasized pasture administration, advisory services, information services and veterinary services:

“The ‘Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic to 2010,’ prepared in 2004 by the Ministry of Agriculture (MAWRPI), highlights the importance of introducing a more sustainable system of pasture management, of strengthening agricultural advisory and information services, and of improving veterinary service provision as priority tasks” (MAWRPI et al. 2007: 6).

According to the Country Development Strategy

“... [i]n the agricultural sector the main goals are increases in agricultural productivity, income growth and environmental soundness, placing high priority on (i) developing agricultural support services and (ii) improving the normative-legislative base governing agriculture” (MAWRPI et al. 2007: 6).



**Figure 2-6: Desintegration of state and collective farms in Kyrgyz Republic (1991-1997)**

Source: Based on data from National Statistics Committee, adapted from Crewett 2003: 7

The reform of the irrigation management structures and the reconstruction of the irrigation infrastructure is part of an “Irrigation Rehabilitation Project” (1998-2005) and a “Water Management Improvement Project” (2006-2010).<sup>1</sup> Both focus on participatory, water-basin-based management of water resources. Water user associations were established during the mid-1990s, initially by the government and since 1998 with considerable support of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (Sehring 2007: 285). 430 Water User Associations (UNEP 2006: 11) were formed and the government planned to establish about 500 by 2010 (Herrfahrdt et al. 2006, 57).

The outcomes of the irrigation system reforms are difficult to assess. In a literature review (Crewett 2015a), I have identified the available studies and reviewed their scope. The scientific studies available at the time data collection started (Herrfahrdt et al. 2006 and Sehring 2007) cover five Water User Associations. Reports commissioned by donor organization involved in irrigation management reforms (UI Hassan et al. 2004, Yakubov 2006) cover additional three cases of Water User Associations (Crewett 2015a). The Water User Associations do not ensure equitable water distribution, particularly to those at the

<sup>1</sup> Relevant decrees were the “Regulation on WUAs in Rural Areas” in 1995 and the “Statute of WUAs in Rural Areas” in August 1997. Strong donor influence contributed to the development of these provisions (Herrfahrdt 2006, 50). In 2002, the “Law on Unions (associations) of Water Users” refined the role, legal status and organizational framework for WUAs as being “voluntary, non-commercial organizations operating in public interest” (Herrfahrdt et al. 2006, 50).

tail end of irrigation systems. The Water User Association executives find it hard to collect sufficient funds to improve infrastructure (Herrfahrdt et al. 2006, Johnson III et al. March 2002, UI Hassan et al. 2004, Yakubov 2006). It is also described that Water User Associations, although planned as participatory organizations, lack support among water users, and that many of the Water User Association members – by law: all water users – do not know about their membership in these associations (Sehring 2007).

The other agricultural service sector for which scientific literature emerged – however, only after field work for this study started, is the pasture sector. Dörre (2012) explores in great depth the first of the two waves of pasture administration reforms and particular legislative changes. Dörre and Borchardt (2012); Schoch et al. (2010), and Steimann (2011) report on outcomes of the first reform approach, which allocated pasture management authority to different administrative levels and established a quasi-rental market, where interested livestock owners received the right to rent pasture plots for very low yearly fees set by the public authorities. As the lease was not determined by the market but by the administration only a quasi-rental market developed. Donors and the government found this reform rather unsuccessful. Pasture rental practices largely deviated from legal provisions so that, as reported by the MAWRPI “most pasture rights allocations are made on a first-come first-served basis without consideration of the needs of other pasture users” (MAWRPI et al. 2007: 6). Unclear regulations leave the administration without oversight of pasture use arrangements. Large-scale pasture degradation is seen as a result of lacking enforcement of maximum stocking rates:

“Yet pasture conditions have deteriorated significantly during the recent past, with village and close-in (winter) pastures being severely overused and degraded, while the more remote summer pastures are underutilized. As a result, pasture productivity has declined, particularly that of winter pastures ... pasture use has become environmentally and socially unsustainable ...” (MAWRPI et al. 2007: 5).

However, in all Central Asian countries pasture quality is not assessed based on current scientific methodology; scientists have therefore called for careful interpretation of the available data on pasture degradation and have urgently recommended exploring reasons for pasture degradation (Kerven et al. 2012). The widely held belief is that overgrazing of pastures close to villages, undergrazing of distant summer pastures and lack of pasture improvement measures result from failures of the quasi-rental approach (World Bank 2007a).

However, pasture administration and allocation are not seen as the only problems in agriculture but a severe lack of farmer education, forage supply and agricultural extension services also contributes to a poor performance of the sector:

“The close-in pastures no longer provide adequate livestock nutrition, and supplemental winter feed is insufficient in both quantity and quality. Combined with widespread and

largely untreated livestock parasites and diseases and the general lack of farmer knowledge of good husbandry techniques, this has led to poor animal performance and livestock production” (Ministry of Agriculture Water Resources and Processing Industry (MAWRPI) et al. 2007: 5).

Since 2009, a second reform approach, on which there existed no scientific literature at the beginning of the research process<sup>2</sup>, was introduced. Like in the irrigation sector, resource users received the right to manage the municipality pastures by forming local committees. For the remaining agricultural services – input supply and machinery services, market information and marketing services, extension services, veterinary services and rural financial services – no scientific literature is available.

However, one document from the gray literature on donor-driven programs offering relevant information is the Livestock Sector Review (World Bank 2007a). This report takes an intermediary position between donor report and scientific report and is clearly based on interview data. However, besides the number of respondents, nothing is said about respondent selection, data documentation and data analysis. It is nevertheless a rich source, mainly for the veterinary service sector.

Most veterinary services that served Soviet farms still operate. The State Veterinary Department has survived in its Soviet structure. There are public veterinarians at regional and district level, as well as local veterinarians paid by the municipality. Private veterinarians have started their own operations. Both private and public veterinarians are subordinated to the State Veterinary Department (World Bank 2007a).

Financial support to the veterinary sector has been drastically withdrawn, while donor involvement in the veterinary sector is very small. Central state laboratories exist in most regions and in several districts; however, most of these laboratories are unable to fulfil their obligations due to lack of staff, broken equipment, lack of materials and insecure access to electricity.

Milk testing, meat inspection, pre-mortem and post-mortem inspection of livestock products have become inadequate or happen only on paper. Veterinary permits – a precondition for selling livestock – are issued by public veterinarians who, as vaccination is offered by a growing number of private veterinarians, are often unable to evaluate the health of the animals for which they issue the permits (World Bank 2007a).

The World Bank’s Livestock Sector Review sees major room for improving the functional distribution in the veterinary sector, as the veterinary law has been criticized for assigning responsibilities to state veterinary services which

---

<sup>2</sup> The first peer-reviewed scientific publication on the topic was published in January 2015 in *Environmental Science and Policy* (Crewett 2015a). This article has, in a slightly modified version, been included in this book as Chapter 6.

“considerably exceed the typical and recommended functions of a public veterinary service and also the capacity of the SVD [State Veterinary Department]” (World Bank 2007a: 46). A new veterinary law was issued in 2005. The law does not clearly define: (i) appropriate responsibilities of the state veterinary service and other providers; (ii) safety management standards for laboratory and food based on HACCP systems; and (iii) private veterinary practices (World Bank 2007a: 47).

“A central problem faced by the Kyrgyz veterinary services is the absence of policies and legislation that define the appropriate role of the state veterinary service in a market economy and comply with the requirements of the WTO, OIE and other international organization. The veterinary law of April 2005 is largely based on those of Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan and not very well geared towards the future” (World Bank 2007a:46).

Besides withdrawing direct services, the government also drastically reduced the number of vaccines provided to the veterinarian services from 45 to 5. In addition, service providers have no access to secure vaccines, marketing chains and sufficient veterinary diagnostic tools. Veterinary personnel are poorly qualified. Control and reporting mechanisms seem to be dysfunctional and oversight of animal diseases and infectious risks lacks.

The veterinary system of the Kyrgyz Republic does not meet international veterinary and sanitary minimum standards. The incidence of animal diseases increased as a result of deficiencies in the current animal health system, including inadequate law enforcement (only 50 to 60 percent of the animals that should be vaccinated receive the required vaccines) (MAWRPI et al. 2007, World Bank 2007a).

The increase in home-made animal foods with inadequate sanitary control over production also poses a significant health risk for the population. According to Ministry of Health data, the situation, especially in the case of brucellosis, is extremely critical and needs swift and determined action (MAWRPI et al. 2007).

Rural financial services are inadequately developed. Although rural credit is available through private banks, there is a shortage of rural credit and a lack of longer-term credit. The ability to borrow is directly linked to the ability to provide physical collateral (buildings), and banks apply high collateral discounting rates. Domestic banks are unable or unwilling to accept other forms of collateral or to finance business transactions (World Bank 2007a: 31-32).

There is no specific literature on available agricultural extension services. The World Bank reports about the Rural Advisory Service and the establishment of Agricultural Training Centres, which suffer a staff shortage. The state has fully withdrawn from agricultural extension services.

Since 1999, a semi-autonomous, donor-financed, participatory Rural Advisory Service (RAS) has been running small offices in all seven regions.



The RAS merged different donor programs for agricultural training and advice. The implementing organization is the Swiss Helvetas Intercooperation. The RAS is co-financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Besides the RAS, some smaller donor organizations provide agricultural training. However, long-term financing of the RAS is insecure. The donors' long-term perspective is to fully withdraw and leave agricultural advisory services to private providers.

## 2.5 Summary of findings

Since independence, the Kyrgyz government has – supported by donors – created an extensive but incomprehensive legal basis for decentralization. The legislation has transferred the responsibility for many rural services to municipality-level actors – the municipality administration, community-based groups or private service providers.

However, only very few agricultural services are clearly distributed: land administration is allocated to the municipality; irrigation and pasture management are allocated to municipality administrations, who are entitled to transfer them to community-based groups; agricultural extension and veterinary services, the provision of inputs and market information are allocated both to private providers and to unspecified public service providers.

The law has not only allocated functions, but has transferred power from central government to the municipality level. New property rights in the sense of ownership rights to natural resources and municipality-level revenues, as well as the right to decide about the distribution of benefits from these new property rights have changed the formal power of municipal administrations. In addition, citizens have received rights to participate in important political decisions by electing a municipality council (*aiyl kenesh*) which has the right to control the municipality administration and its elected head, the mayor. Also, community-based organizations have the right to operate financially independent from the municipality administration.

However, many of these entitlements cannot be used in practice – particularly by municipality administrations. Laws do not clearly allocate competencies and rights and are usually not enforced by the central authorities. Staff members are not trained, finances are not transferred and support is denied. Own budget revenues and income from municipality property are insufficient for independent decisions. The same holds for community-based organizations. The Water User Associations received some decision making powers, but lack expertise and financial means to provide even basic services. In many cases, community-based organizations exist only on paper.

Changes in accountability relationships have remained formal only. First, by law, municipality-level councils are to hold municipality-level executive bodies

formally accountable. However, as municipality councils lack information on their role, they seem to have very little impact on municipality administrations. Second, municipality administrations are formally independent from the central state. However, the very limited empirical evidence suggests that in practice, the municipality administrations are fully dependent on financial transfers from the central government and obey orders from different bodies of the LSA, as they face unclear rules, which restricts their autonomy.

Scientific literature on agricultural services is scarce. The available information is shallow, not comprehensive and often prepared by donors in cooperation with government agencies. It suggests that most efforts went into improving agricultural services concerned with natural resources, such as irrigation and pasture management. Larger donor-supported programs have been set up here. All other services have not been comprehensively reviewed and their municipality-level provision is fully unexplored.

## **2.6 Conclusions and knowledge gaps**

There is a lack of independent, specific studies on agricultural services. For most agricultural services there is no information. Only irrigation has received scientific attention. For specific services, such as marketing or input provision, there is no information at all. Besides, there is no information on service users' satisfaction, interests and needs. The general literature finds that only some of the services allocated to municipalities are actually provided. Does this also hold for the agricultural sector? Which services are provided and why? How are these services provided? Do they satisfy user needs?

Even though the literature suggests a link between a "post-socialist mindset" and decentralization outcomes, the available information on agricultural service provision is not contextualized and does not explore links between local socio-economic conditions, decentralized local governance and agricultural service provision. There is little qualitative information on upward and downward accountability of service providers and on reasons for failure of service provision. Hence, decentralized governance and agricultural service provision should be analyzed in context.

**Table 2-7: Agricultural services allocated to government**

Service	Provision-related statement in Agrarian Policy Concept
Veterinary services	Participation in controlling spread of animal diseases, veterinary diagnostics, inspection of product quality, regulation of private veterinary clinics and licensing of veterinarians, research, education and training of personnel. Also mentioned that veterinarians should get access to credit and donor support, but <i>how</i> this is achieved is not outlined.
	Financing: Veterinarians should receive “annual state allocations” of equipment.
Phytosanitary control	State inspectorate to supply rural producers with agrochemicals, organize agrochemical services, forecast pests and weeds.
	State control over use of pesticides through registration, certification of agrochemicals.
	Licensing of agrochemical activities.
	Certification of agrochemical products.
	Government invests in laboratory equipment for State Inspectorate for Chemicalization and Plant Protection.
Seed provision	Production of agricultural seeds and marketing to be gradually transferred to the private sector. In the future it is planned to keep 10 to 20% of state-owned seed farms, mainly to organize seed selection, production of seeds in nurseries, elite and super-elite seed reproduction, while giving preference to privately-owned seed farms for other activities. It is necessary to ensure proper marketing of agricultural seeds and to assign particular seed farms to agricultural farms.
	Transfer of regional variety centers into variety testing stations.
	Maintaining primary multiplication of seeds and planting stock of prospective crops.
	Seed inspectorates should keep improving seed potatoes and certify seed and planting materials.
	The government should improve the certification system and increase responsibility of laboratories for

identification of seed quality. The private sector will receive technical assistance to resume growing perennial seeds and exporting them to Central Asia and Russia.

Financing to be provided to strengthen material and technical basis of the stations, and seminars and trainings conducted to study new varieties, variety agrotechnique and variety policy.

Educational, advisory and information services	Conduction of Extension and Farmers' Days, training for farmers; organization of exhibitions and demonstration sites to spread innovation and advanced knowledge; organization of conferences and workshops are priority tasks of the government, donors and non-governmental organizations.
Education and training	Subsidized establishment of demonstration pastures in each district until 2010.  To ensure timely and reliable provision of information, it is planned to set up a computerized network in the Republic offering the latest data on market situation and prices.  Providing peasant and private farms with timely data on demand for products, and prices both in external and domestic markets.

Source: *Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010*

**Table 2-8: Agricultural services allocated to private sector**

Service	Provision-related statement in Agrarian Policy Concept
Veterinary services	Prevention and treatment
Machinery	Machinery leasing (international leasing companies and firms mainly from the CIS countries) and domestic construction of machinery and agricultural equipment.
Seed	Establish specialized seed firms, cooperatives and associations based on existing corn calibration plants, lucerne seed dressing stations, enterprises for modifying seeds of vegetables, melons, tobacco, sugar beet, and tree nurseries.
Credit	Improvement of credit availability through rural banks, and reorganization of credit unions into banks.
Sheep breeding	Two established private farms breeding Australian merino sheep – in Talas Region ( <i>Oblast</i> ) “Altyn Zhun” and in

Chui Region (*Oblast*) “Erlan A” – will be reorganized into breeding plants.

To promote breeding, it is anticipated to reorganize state breeding plants into private breeding farms and state breeding enterprises into private artificial insemination companies and breeding stations. Development of state and private pedigree cattle and development of private selection and pedigree activities through associations and cooperatives of private cattle breeders and farmers.

Program on milk and meat cattle breeding to be established soon. Central-Asian Breeding Service set up within the Kyrgyz-Swiss Agricultural Program.

Source: own representation based on Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010

**Table 2-9: Agricultural services allocated to the cooperative sector**

Service	Provision-related statement in Agrarian Policy Concept
Marketing	Cooperatives should mainly cover support services, processing and marketing. Joint activities in seed production, genetic resources, cash crops and animal husbandry.
Breeding	With increasing sheep population and improved breeding quality, higher production and export of mutton is planned.
Finance	Kyrgyz Agricultural Finance Corporation and many other credit unions to be established under the “Rural Financial Institutions” project. In the future, these and other credit institutions should be reorganized into banks, as the main instrument of the agro-industrial complex.

Source: own representation based on Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010

**Table 2-10: Agricultural services allocated to donors**

Service	Provision-related statement in Agrarian Policy Concept
Agricultural support services	“Significant role in the development of agricultural support services” (GKR 2004: 18).
Seed improvement	To be supported by not further specified donors

Source: own representation based on Agrarian Policy Concept of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010

### **3 Decentralization of agricultural service provision**

#### **3.1 Kyrgyzstan – a case study for the decentralization of publicly provided agricultural services**

The literature about decentralization in Kyrgyzstan is skeptical about the impact of decentralization on service provision (see findings in previous Chapter 2). The authors suggest that service provision was not positively affected by decentralization. Their key criticism is a lack of effective accountability relationships, allowing neither citizens, nor Local Self-governments to hold accountable the central government, but also donors. The reviewed literature, however, did not explore agricultural service provision specifically. The few studies of rural decentralization do not take into account the full context in which services are provided. Hence, important knowledge gaps were identified. The previous chapter has found the need to contextually analyze relationships between decentralized local governance and agricultural service provision. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to explore the links between decentralization and agricultural service provision.

The overall research question is: how has decentralization impacted the availability and quality of agricultural services? Specific research questions are:

- How has decentralization impacted accountability relationships, power and the allocation of agricultural service tasks at municipality level?
- Which agricultural services are available at municipality level and how and by whom are these services provided?
- What is the specific role of municipality administrations in the provision of agricultural services?
- How is the current status of agricultural service provision evaluated by service users?

To enable contextual analysis, this chapter provides an in-depth contextual case study of agricultural service provision in four rural municipalities in Kyrgyzstan.

The next section outlines the case study approach, data collection and data analysis strategy used and provides a detailed review of the case study municipalities, their socio-economic conditions and local governance structures (Section 3.2). In Section 3.3, I continue with a description of the specific outcomes of decentralization, based on Agrawal and Ribot's (1999) framework for the study of decentralization (see introduction of that framework in the previous Chapter 2.2). I therefore explore municipality-level access to power resources (Section 3.4). This is followed by information on the accountability relationship between local decision makers (Section 3.5). Section 3.6 summarizes the status of agricultural service provision at the case study sites based on interviews with indi-

viduals and groups of agricultural service users and service providers. Section 3.7 analyses information on service user satisfaction collected at all study sites. The discussion and conclusions in Section 3.8 reviews the scope of action available to and used by Local Self-governments providing agricultural services, embeds the findings into the broader debate on decentralized service provision and highlights further avenues of research.

## **3.2 The case studies**

### *3.2.1 Case study selection*

Field data was collected in four rural municipalities. Case study selection was based on a maximum variation purposeful sampling strategy (Patton 2001), aiming at maximum variation in agricultural production patterns, livelihood conditions and socio-political conditions. Due to a lack of reliable agricultural statistics and experience in the country at the time of case study selection, the selection was based on two key criteria. First, geographical location and, second, a cultural-political criterion. It was assumed that the country's geomorphological conditions – with a lowest point at 132 masl and the highest point 7,439 masl – strongly impact agro-ecological conditions and agricultural production systems within the country. Choosing case studies located at different altitudes was therefore assumed to lead to a broad variation in agricultural patterns. Second, municipalities were chosen according to their location in two distinct cultural-geographic regions of the country: the North, which refers to the regions Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Chuy and Talas; and the South, which refers to the administrative regions of Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken (see Map 3-1) for the location of the regions). While it is claimed that the North is impacted more strongly by Russian tradition, there is a widely held belief that in the South Central Asian traditions and Muslim religion have more influence. Both regions also support different political parties (Ryabkov 2008). There is also a belief that Northerners and Southerners differ in their agricultural expertise:

“Several interviewees stated that in the South of Kyrgyzstan agricultural expertise is far better founded than in the North. The reason for this are land scarcity and the resulting need to cultivate in more intensive ways as well as a longer tradition of agriculture in the South. Also, the farmers in the South seem to be more interested in training programs ...” (Herrfahrdt et al. 2006, 86).



**Map 3-1: Administrative regions (*oblasts*) of Kyrgyzstan**

1= City of Bishkek, 2= Batken, 3= Chuy, 4= Jalal-Abad, 5= Naryn, 6= Osh, 7= Talas, 8= Issyk-Kul

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyrgyzstan>

Data for this study were collected from May to July 2008 in four case study municipalities. I held individual interviews with purposefully selected experts at national, regional and municipality level. In addition, I conducted two group interviews in each municipality. As I am bound to a confidentiality agreement with all municipality-level respondents, the names of the municipalities have partly been changed. I also decided to keep respondents anonymous.

Table 3-1 links the case study selection criteria and the case study municipalities. Municipality A, which I call Ala Too, is a community located in an elevated flatland area approximately 50 km South of lake Yssyk Kul in Tong district; Municipality B, which I call Bulak, is a very remote and extremely high-altitude community in the At Bashy river basin in At Bashy district; Municipality C, which is called Kyzyl Suu, is located in a mountainous area bordering Kara-Daryja river in Uzgen district and Municipality D, which I call Bolshevik, is located in the lowlands near the Uzbek border in Osh district. As can be seen in Table 3-1, highland and lowland municipalities, in which different agro-ecological conditions could be expected, were chosen from each of the two cultural-political regions. In each municipality consisting of several villages, the municipality center was chosen for data collection.

The municipalities had between 951 and 3,574 inhabitants (2008). As an effect of land distribution during de-collectivization, all families in all municipalities owned land and almost all except the poorest of the poor owned some heads of sheep.

**Table 3-1: Case study selection criteria**

	Highland location	Lowland location
--	-------------------	------------------

The North	Municipality B Municipality Bulak	Municipality A Municipality Ala Too
The South	Municipality C Municipality Kyzyl Suu	Municipality D Municipality Bolshevik

Source: own representation

### 3.2.2 *Socio-economic conditions*

The dominating livelihood strategy in the highly mountainous villages is animal breeding for meat production. The transhumance period is from April to September. Animals are sent to the pasture with herdsman, or the entire family (less common) migrates to the summer pasture. This is accompanied by regular or occasional selling of milk from cows, which are kept with young calves in the village. Potatoes are mainly grown for home consumption. For the majority of residents, producing other crops plays only a minor role. In the southern Municipalities Kyzyl Suu and Bolshevik, market-oriented crop production dominates. This is complemented by livestock production. Like in the highlands, livestock is kept on pastures far from the municipality and supervised by herdsman.

Other activities, varying between marketing purposes and subsistence production, complement agricultural work: wage labour (mainly construction work or day labour on farms) or retail (small grocery and liquor shops or handicrafts shops). Running a business is rare and is only an option to the very wealthy.

Particularly the poor work on farms of better-off farmers, in the construction business or as herdsman. For them, government social transfer payments, which are very small, are a major source of cash income. Migration to Russia and Kazakhstan, often for a time period of one or two years, is common among young residents in all municipalities visited.

According to municipality statistics, the share of very poor households registered was between 14% and 36%. An assessment of the social-economic situation at the study sites was difficult, as official statistics are highly unreliable, and the existing instrument for identifying beneficiaries of social assistance, the so-called social passport, was fully dysfunctional. Field work showed that the social passports were based on different calculation methods in each of the study municipalities. While there was a tendency to consider those with a monthly income under KZS 500-600 poor and entitled to government support, the income levels according to which families were classed in different poverty categories – less poor, poor and very poor – differed between study villages.

According to municipality administrators, poverty was decreasing at all study sites. Municipality administrators saw the following reasons for reduced poverty: (i) improved engagement of the poor in the labour market; (ii) growing experience in farming and marketing of products; (iii) remittances, which more and more families received from relatives working in Russia and Kazakhstan.

**Table 3-2: Case study municipalities**

	<b>Ala Too</b>	<b>Bulak</b>	<b>Kyzyl Suu</b>	<b>Bolshevik</b>
Altitude of municipality (masl)	1,900	2,400	1,100	850
Socio-geographic location	North	North	South	South
Climatic zone	Steppe climate	Steppe climate	Continental climate	Steppe climate
Distance to district centre (km)	35	45	30	8
Population	951	3,504	3,308	3,874
Households	246	740	584	671
Households classified as very poor (% of all households) <sup>1</sup>	13.8	36.1	17.6	30.3
Ethnic composition (% of total population)				
Kyrgyz	100	100	100	87
Uzbek	0	0	0	10
Other	0	0	0	3

Source: Information obtained during interviews, data based on municipality statistics 2009, climate data based on Schuler et al. (2004). Order to maintain anonymity of the municipalities the altitudes of the municipalities have been slightly rounded

### 3.2.3 Agricultural production patterns

Agro-ecological conditions (climate, local topography and the status of the irrigation infrastructure) impacted land use at all study sites. Of the country's 10.6 million ha of agricultural land, only 6.7 % is arable land used for temporary crops; meadows and pastures cover 48.3% of the total agricultural area (FAO 2015). Most arable land is in the northern Chui valley bordering Kazakhstan. The smaller share is located in the southwest, the Kyrgyz part of the Fergana Valley, near the Uzbek border.

These conditions also impacted agricultural production patterns at the study sites. Dry summer continental climate – in other words cold steppe climate –

<sup>1</sup> Defined by municipality administration as households with an income of less than 200 KZS/month.

impacts three of the four study sites, with annual precipitation between 382 mm/m<sup>2</sup> in Municipality Bolshevik and only 209 mm/m<sup>2</sup> in Municipality Ala Too. In the two highland Municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, located above 1,900 masl, transhumant livestock production dominated, while farmers in the two lower municipalities were also substantially engaged in crop production.

In Municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, livestock production was based on natural pasture use. Farming families grew only a small selection of staple foods for home consumption: barley, potatoes and forage crops are the main crops, whereas in the lowlands, crops are more diversified and also include vegetables.

In the highlands, all interviewed farmers considered grain production relatively risky due to insecure weather conditions (hail) and an unreliable duration of the vegetation period; therefore, only better-off households engaged in costly crop production. At all mountainous study sites, the lack of reliable irrigation during the summer period was a key constraint for crop production.

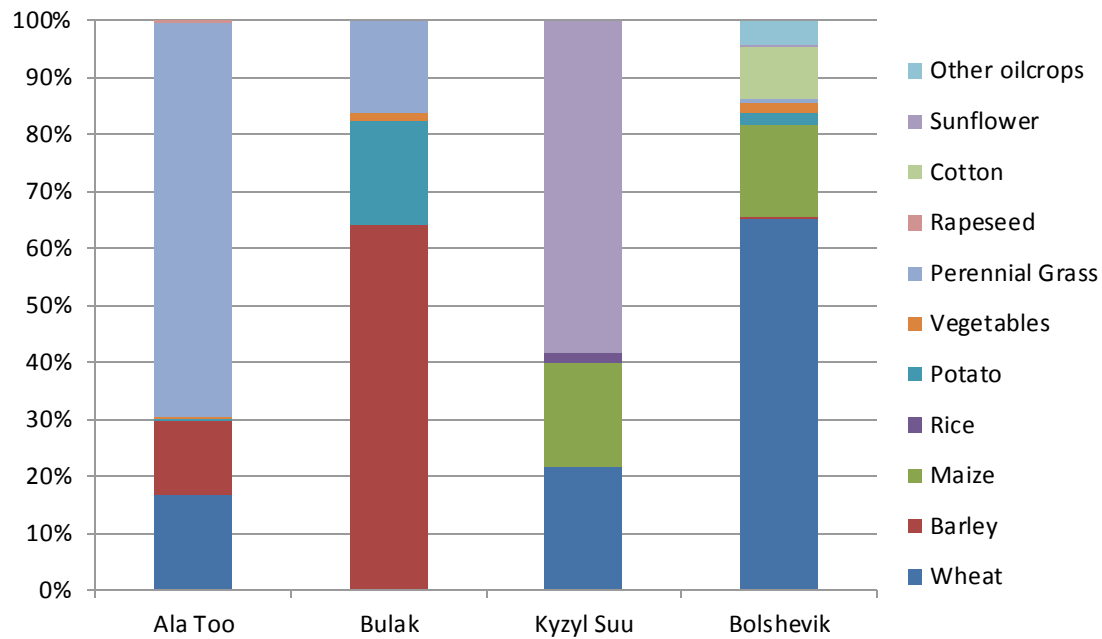
In the lowlands, crop production was much more important. A longer vegetation period and better rainfall data in Municipality Kyzyl Suu, and comparatively functional irrigation system in Municipality Bolshevik, allowed for diversified crop production.

Agricultural production data were compiled from locally available municipality statistics. There is considerable concern about the accuracy of any local-level data – land use data, for example, are skewed by overlapping classification systems. The available data, nevertheless, give some basic impression of land use. Figure 3-1 shows land use patterns for crop production in percent.

According to local statistics for 2008, in Municipality Ala Too more land was used for perennial grass than for crops; the two major ones being barley and wheat. The larger part of the crop land of Municipality Ala Too was not irrigated, which made grain production impossible. In addition, the weather conditions are considered too unreliable for crop production, machinery lacks and many farmers considered agricultural inputs very expensive. In Municipality Bulak, barley – also for forage purposes – dominated. While the agro-ecological conditions were broadly similar, the comparatively better status of the irrigation system allowed for grain production.

Municipality Kyzyl Suu had an intermediary position. Also due to a breakdown of the largest part of the irrigation system, most land was used for sunflowers, which were grown on non-irrigated land. Maize and wheat are the other important crops. There were small pockets of rice production next to the adjacent river.

Municipality Bolshevik depended on irrigated agriculture. The municipality's irrigation system needed reconstruction in some areas, but irrigation water was nevertheless much more available than at any other studied site. Consequently, a wide variety of crops is grown. Interview partners were mainly engaged in maize, wheat and cotton production.



**Figure 3-1: Agricultural land use in percent (2008)**

Source: Case study municipality administrations

Livestock data were compiled from the National Statistics Committee's statistics. Livestock numbers are also highly unrealistic, as farmers reportedly aim to hide as many animals as possible from tax inspections. In the highland Municipalities Ala Too, Bulak, and Kyzyl Suu respondents considered livestock their main agricultural income source. In Municipality Bolshevik, however, respondents estimated that animal products made up only about one third of the household income. Hence, animal stocks were larger in the highland municipalities. Sheep were the main livestock and dominated the municipality herd (Figure 3-2). Individual households possess sheep herds that are two times larger than those owned by lowland municipalities and households in the southern municipalities (Figure 3-3).

### 3.2.4 Constraints on agricultural production

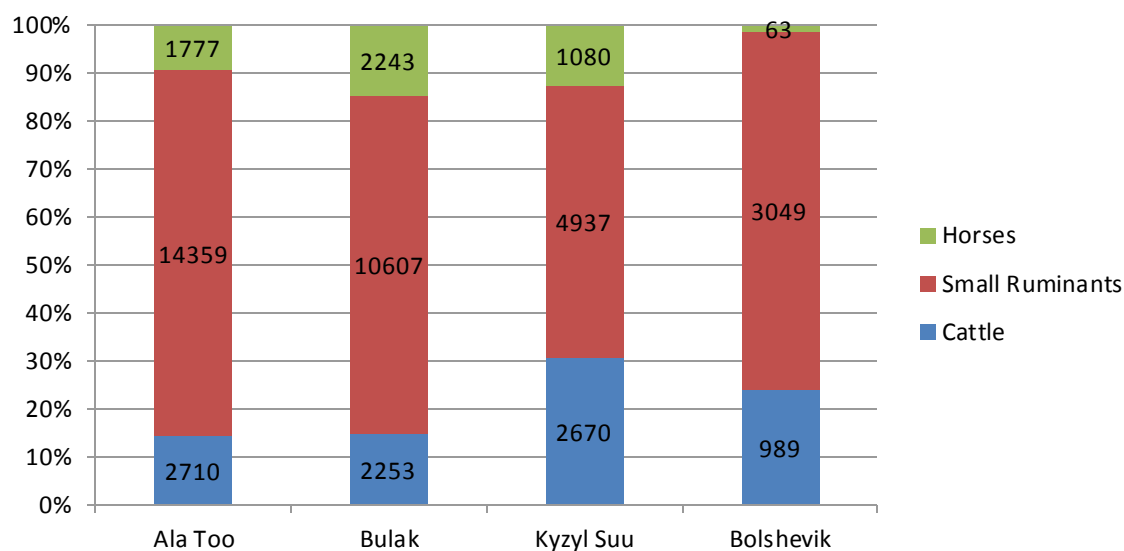
Asked for key development obstacles in the municipalities, the municipalities' majors mainly mentioned, besides problems in drinking water supply, almost exclusively constraints on agricultural production. Most of these problems were caused by the absence of important services to the agricultural sector:

- the ongoing or entire deterioration of the irrigation infrastructure, which most of the municipalities had inherited from the Soviet period was considered a key problem by all interviewed mayors;
- veterinary health problems, including a high prevalence of zoonotic diseases, but also veterinary service gaps, such as the lack of artificial insemination in

Municipality Kyzyl Too, where no bull was available during summer, were mentioned by three of them;

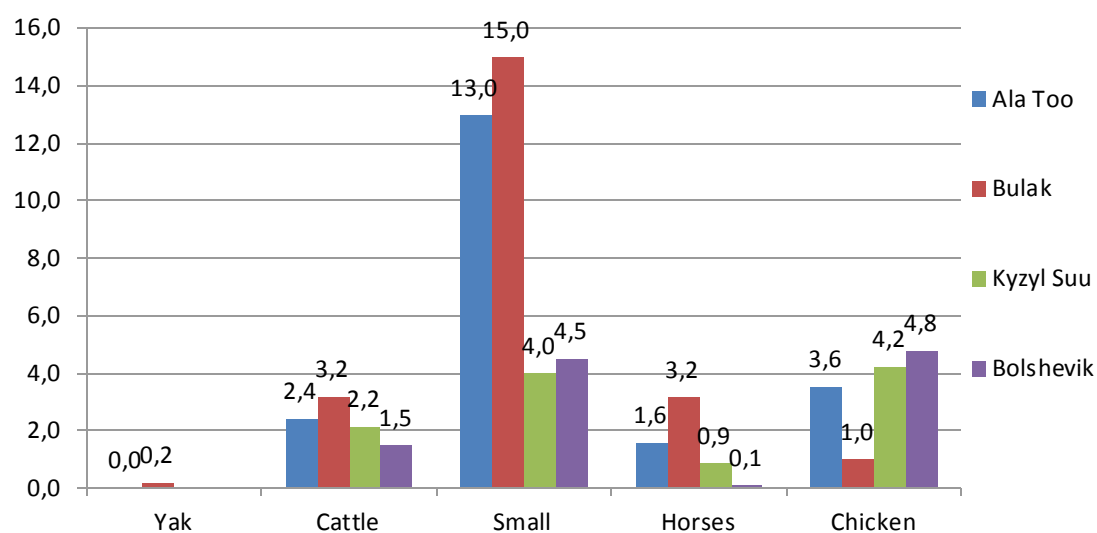
- insufficient access to agricultural machinery was considered a key constraint in two of the municipalities. In both municipalities crop producers depended on using machinery owned by farmers in a neighboring village which usually led to delay in all agricultural activities from soil preparation to harvest;
- and one mayor mentioned, in addition, problems with pests and crop diseases as for which farmers lacked access to expert knowledge in crop protection and adequate access to crop disease and weed control.

The key development obstacles listed above reflect the problem perception of the municipalities' mayors, complementary information on agricultural service provision, based on group discussions held with service users in each study site are documented and analyzed in Sections 3.6 and 3.7.



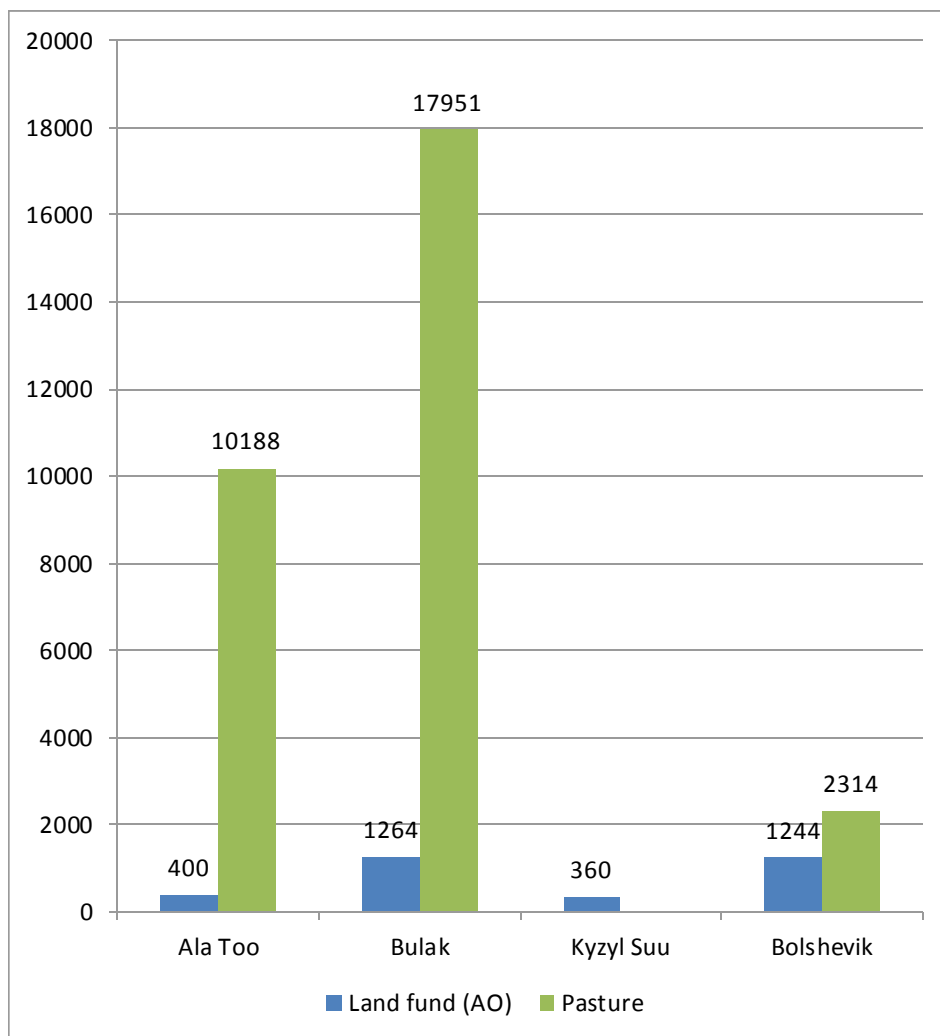
**Figure 3-2: Heads of animals (2007)**

Source: National Statistics Committee



**Figure 3-3: Heads of animals per household (2007)**

Source: own calculations based on National Statistics Committee and municipality statistics



**Figure 3-4: Size of Land Redistribution Fund and size of village-adjacent pasture area (ha) (2007)**

Source: Municipality statistics; no official data on size of village-adjacent pasture for Municipality Kyzyl Suu available. Note the size of pasture given by municipality administrations is highly unreliable because municipality administrations had no access to full information on the size of pasture used by their citizens. This was because large parts of the pasture used by the municipality residents were not under the authority of the municipality administration



**Table 3-3: Municipality mayor's perceptions of key obstacles to development**

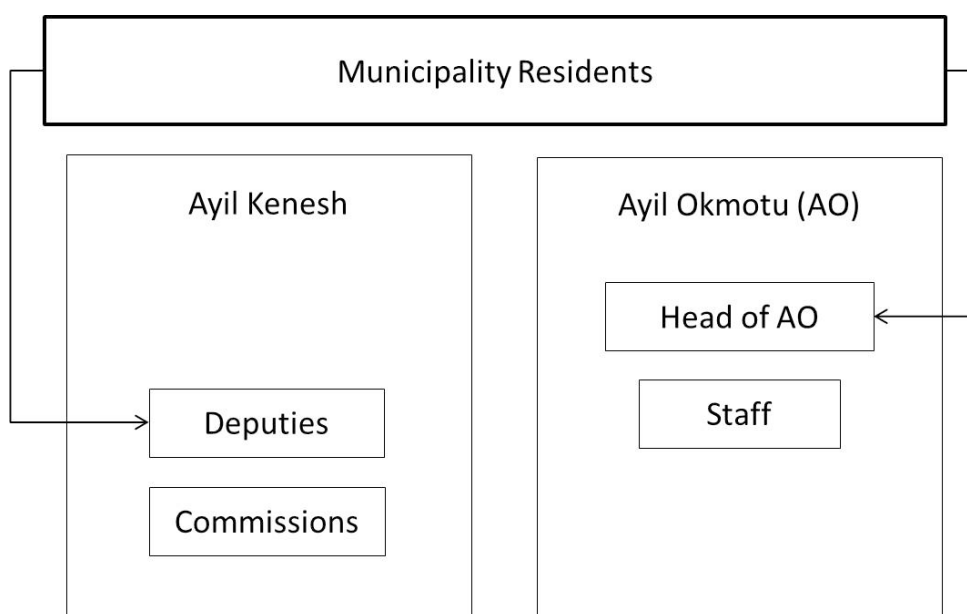
Ala Too	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of agricultural machinery</li> <li>• Irrigation infrastructure destroyed</li> <li>• Population suffers from health problems</li> <li>• Animal diseases prevalent</li> </ul>
Bulak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation infrastructure destroyed</li> <li>• Drinking water project failed, too few drinking water pumps</li> <li>• Veterinary service insufficient, veterinary disease control inadequate</li> <li>• Lack of agricultural machinery</li> </ul>
Kyzyl Suu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No improved drinking water provision, river is main source for drinking water</li> <li>• Breakdown of entire irrigation infrastructure</li> <li>• Support in control of crop diseases and weed needed</li> <li>• No bull or artificial insemination in the municipality during summer</li> <li>• Insufficient access to village-adjacent pasture for grazing of dairy cows</li> </ul>
Bolshevik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progressive decay of irrigation infrastructure</li> <li>• Maintenance and improvement of drinking water system required</li> <li>• Frequent drinking water cut-offs</li> <li>• Road reconstruction required</li> <li>• Lack of building land</li> </ul>

Source: Interviews with municipalities' mayors

### 3.3 Local governance

#### 3.3.1 The municipality government

In the study municipalities, the local governance bodies – so-called Local Self-governments – were structured in the following way: each consisted of an elected village council (Kyrg.: *aiyl kenesh*) and an executive body called village government (Kyrg.: *aiyl okmot*). All village governments consisted of a social department, an agricultural department, a statistical department, an officer responsible for registration of military personnel, and a department of finance and tax collection. Some of the municipalities also had veterinary departments and employed librarians. At the time of data collection, the head of the village government was also the chairperson of the municipality council (see Figure 3-5).



**Figure 3-5: Structure of municipality administration (Aiyl Okmotu)**

Source: INTRAC (2011), modified

#### 3.3.2 Local organizations and groups

A surprisingly large number of other organizations and groups existed in all study municipalities. Participants in group interviews reported of 4 to 11 groups in the different municipalities. On average, there was one group or organization per 67 households, with a range from one group per 62 households in Municipality Ala Too to one group per 74 households in Municipality Bolshevik (see Table 3-4).

The respondents considered these groups to provide important complementary services (see Table 3-5). Some were formed to provide public services or implement programs, others were vehicles to access donor support. As all pro-

vided services were in need, those types of groups were therefore considered important to some degree by the respondents.

**Table 3-4: Community-based organizations or groups per municipality**

	<b>Ala Too</b>	<b>Bulak</b>	<b>Kyzyl Suu</b>	<b>Bolshevik</b>
Number of community-based organizations/groups	4	11	9	9
Number of households	246	740	584	671
Number of households per community-based group	62	68	65	74

Source: group interviews by author in case study sites

Four types of groups were formed by different actors and provided some sort of private or public service or other governance support: First, groups formed by donors to provide basic public services. These groups existed in all municipalities and had been initiated during large-scale development projects, which were mainly financed by international donors. They included drinking water user associations, irrigation water user associations and two types of infrastructure development support groups.<sup>1</sup> Second, groups formed by Kyrgyz NGOs or smaller international NGOs in the frame of programs in specified regions or municipalities,<sup>2</sup> which aimed at economic self-help or gave the NGOs access to community members and simplified their information dissemination activities. The third type of group are locally initiated community-based groups – among them: (i) a social support group aiming to assist the elderly and handicapped; (ii) a cooperative providing machinery services to its members; or (iii) a so-called neighbourhood group (whose activities, however, were not clear to the respond-

<sup>1</sup> Those groups were formed under a large-scale project which was implemented in all municipalities of the country. The program founded so-called *Territorial Investment Committees* (TIC) in almost all municipalities and subordinate *Village Investment Committees* (VIC), which were responsible for social and economic infrastructure development. In addition, citizens were motivated to form micro-project groups which aimed at supporting specific income-generating activities among their members. However, villagers are not aware of this terminology and call the groups – according to the name of the implementing organization – “ARIS-groups”. According to World Bank data, 1661 VICs were formed.

<sup>2</sup> Among these were, for example, forage production support or microcredit groups by a small New Zealand NGO in Municipality Bulak.

ents). The fourth type is traditional groups, such as elders' councils or courts, which existed in three of the four municipalities.

Respondents considered many of these groups important or very important for community development. Existing groups were evaluated differently based on their outreach. In all municipalities, groups who served only their direct members or very small groups of people (like a machinery cooperative which seems to operate only one tractor, women's microcredit groups or sewing groups) were not considered very important. Given the lack of functioning drinking water facilities, impassable streets and dysfunctional schools, drinking water user associations and infrastructure development project groups (linked to international organizations) were in all cases considered very important.<sup>3</sup> Next most important, across all municipalities, were health and veterinary service organizations.<sup>4</sup> There were very different opinions on the importance of traditional courts or councils. In Municipality Bulak, the traditional court was considered not important at all, in Municipality Kyzyl Suu it held an intermediary position, while in Municipality Bolshevik, the traditional court was considered very important.

---

<sup>3</sup> There was, however, very little enthusiasm among the population to participate in these groups – particularly in the drinking water or infrastructure development groups. Follow-up interviews with group members showed, however, that there was a widespread problem with mobilization of group members for any of these groups. In most cases, the members – in particular those who had some responsible positions within these groups – were frustrated due to a) little engagement of the remaining community, b) no compensation for their service to the community, and c) even hostility when they demanded some community contribution, either financially or in terms of work, as well as limited success of the projects. In all municipalities, there were reports of stolen construction material, wrong planning, massive problems in collection of community contributions, etc.

<sup>4</sup> The respondents also named service provider organizations run by professionally trained staff – such as health or veterinary service providers – as a group. Health services are usually not provided by “community-based” groups. However, in Kyrgyz terminology, the health provision points are called “family group practitioners” which might have motivated respondents to consider health service providers a group. The same happened for veterinary service providers, who usually had veterinary assistants. It seems that the respondents considered activities in which more than one individual was involved to be carried out by a group.

**Table 3-5: Number and type of organizations and community-based groups in each of the study municipalities**

Respondents' assessment of importance	Ala Too	Bulak	Kyzyl Suu	Bolshevik
<b>Very important for municipality</b>	Infrastructure development group <sup>1</sup> Drinking water committee Credit group Crafting group	Infrastructure development group Drinking water committee Agricultural training group Health committee	Infrastructure development group Drinking water committee	Infrastructure development group Irrigation water Tomato processing and marketing group Elders' court <sup>2</sup> Elders' council <sup>3</sup>
<b>Of some importance for municipality</b>		Training group 1 <sup>4</sup> Training group 2 Neighbourhood group <sup>5</sup>	Elders' council Traditional court Women's council	Youth group <sup>6</sup>
<b>Not important for municipality</b>		Forage group Traditional court Women's council Training group 3	Machinery cooperative Crafting group Cooperative <sup>7</sup> Credit group	Credit group 1 Credit group 2 Assistance to the handicapped
<b>Number of groups</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>

<sup>1</sup> This is a simplified name for a so-called *Territorial Village Investment Committees* (TIC) founded by a World Bank financed development program called *Village Investment Project* (VIP I)

<sup>2</sup> Function is conflict resolution.

<sup>3</sup> Function is to support what respondents called "cultural events".

<sup>4</sup> Respondents were not able to specify the actual content of the trainings provided in any of Training groups 1 to 3.

<sup>5</sup> Respondents were not able to specify the activities of this group.

<sup>6</sup> Function is social support to the elderly and poor.

<sup>7</sup> Some respondents were of the opinion that this cooperative exists on paper only.

**Table 3-6: Service providers not organized in any form of community-based group**

	<b>Ala Too</b>	<b>Bulak</b>	<b>Kyzyl Suu</b>	<b>Bolshevik</b>
	Health care point (one nurse)	Health service	Health service Veterinary service provider NGO provides training courses (no specific group)	Health service Agricultural extension service Legal advisory service Veterinary service provider NGO provides training courses (no specific group) Milk collection service
<b>Number of service providers</b>	1	1	3	6

### 3.3.3 Non-governmental Organizations

The section above already pointed to the importance of donors' activities at municipality level. International and Kyrgyz NGOs were major partners of the village governments. They supported municipalities with training on business development and agriculture (see Table 3-6). Some large-scale projects were financed by consortia of donor organizations, including the World Bank, ADB, the UNDP, DFID and many others. Among the large programs, the most important was the *Village Investments Project* (VIP) which had – since its start in 2006 – supported all study municipalities in developing social and economic infrastructure. The VIP had financed and facilitated the improvement of community water points (Municipalities Ala Too, Bulak, Kyzyl Suu, Bolshevik), health facilities (in Municipalities Bulak, Kyzyl Suu, Bolshevik), roads (in Municipalities Bulak, Bolshevik), school renovation (in Municipalities Ala Too, Bulak) and renovation of community meeting halls (in Municipalities Bulak, Kyzyl Suu, Bolshevik).

The NGOs played a key role for the establishment of most of the community-based groups mentioned in the previous Section 3.3.3. One important example is the World Bank's *Village Investments Project* (VIP), which is implemented in the entire country by the Kyrgyz Community and Development Agency (ARIS). The *Village Investments Project* requires the establishment of several community-based groups in charge of project development, implementation and supervision. They are also responsible for mobilization of the communities' financial contributions. The project concept requires municipalities to contribute 25% of the project costs in terms of labor and make a financial contribution of at least 3.75% in cash. World Bank staff describes the local structures for VIP-implementation as follows:

“Villages elect village investment committees (VICs) that in turn elect their representatives to the local investment committee (LICs) covering the entire community. The LIC comprises at least one member from each VIC plus an equal number (minus one) of members from the formal institutions of local government (the mayor and a number of council members). [...] The villages and then the communities agree on a local development vision, identify their priority problems, and propose micro-projects to address these. Each micro-project proposal is developed and advocated by a micro-project group, citizens volunteering to lead this activity. Participatory planning meetings are held, where micro-project proposals are discussed, prioritized and refined. [...] Through a series of meetings, discussions and votes the communities then agree on a community development plan and an annual community investment plan which is formally approved by the community council. [...] Micro-projects are then implemented by the community under the leadership of the micro-project groups” (World Bank 2005: 2).

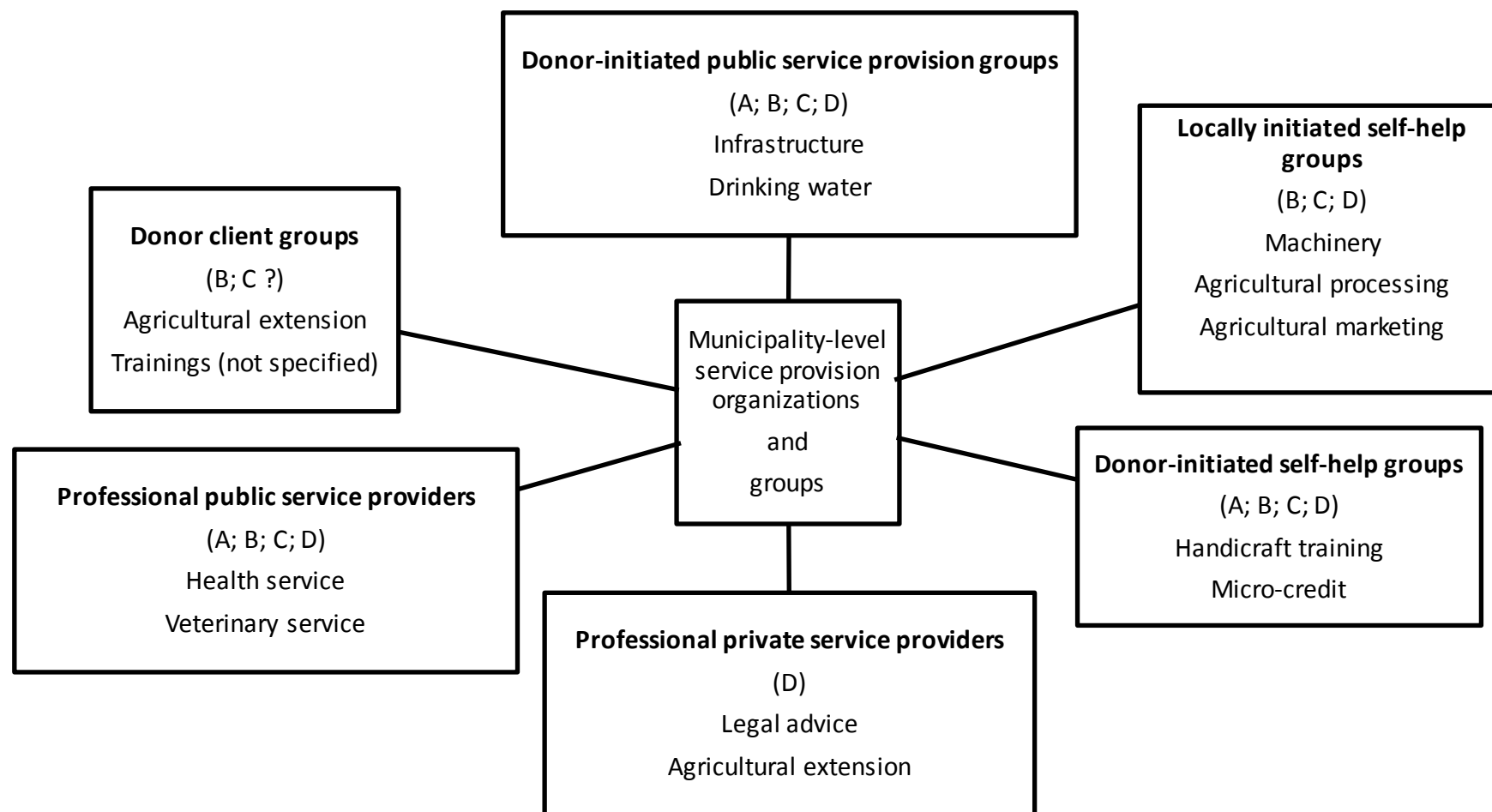
Nationwide NGOs were complemented by several – sometimes small – international NGOs (e.g., New Kyrgyzstan New Zealand Trust, which ran a small-scale goat-breeding and forage production project in Municipality Bulak) and local – but nevertheless externally funded Kyrgyz NGOs (such as the Rural Advisory Service<sup>1</sup>, which provided advisory services in Municipality Bulak, or the organization “Legal Assistance to Rural Citizens”,<sup>2</sup> which provided legal advice to farmers in Municipality Bolshevik). It is important to note that the high dependency on donor support had strong implications for the Local Self-government’s role: in order to mobilize resources for the municipality, they acted, to different degrees, as negotiators between their municipalities and outside donors, hoping to bring services and infrastructure to the villages.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Rural Advisory Services (RAS) is a NGO, created by the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), as a part of the Kyrgyz-Swiss Agricultural Project (KSAP), which was funded by SDC and implemented by HELVETAS (Swiss Inter-cooperation Kyrgyzstan) from 1995 to 2010.” (Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services n.d)

<sup>2</sup> “The Legal Assistance to Rural Citizens (LARC) was established under a project funded by USAID and SDC. It provides legal services to rural populations, especially in the matters of land ownership in line with agricultural reforms. The project eventually led to the creation of the Kyrgyz LARC Public Association (PA).” (Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services n. d.)



**Figure 3-6: Types of service provision organizations and groups in each study municipality based on group interviews**

Source: Group interviews in case study municipalities; the letter indicates the case study municipality (A: Municipality Ala Too; B: Municipality Bulak; C: Municipality Kyzyl Suu; D: Municipality Bolshevik), own representation

### 3.4 Power resources

In this section, I explore power resources the different groups of actors at municipality level hold. The data used for the analysis were collected in the field. It was attempted to fill data gaps with information from the Kyrgyz Statistics Committee.

#### 3.4.1 Land rights allocated to municipality residents

*De-collectivization experience.* Ownership rights for most of the agricultural land have been transferred from collective farms to private households. In all municipalities, the land reform program was finalized between 1995 and 1999. Farm dismantling and land distribution followed the same procedure in each of the municipalities. Prior to de-collectivization, the inhabitants of the entire municipality worked on the local *kolkhoz*. All municipality residents born before a defined date received rights to a share of land. The amount of land each person received depended on the available total area of agricultural land, which was divided by the number of claimants. In this way, all residents received the same share of irrigated and non-irrigated land. If available, natural grassland was distributed to every person. The share of land distributed to each person in every family is shown in Table 3-7. The land holders hold full private property rights to land. Selling and buying land is allowed.

**Table 3-7: Land share distribution per person**

	Municipality			
	Ala Too	Bulak	Kyzyl Suu	Bolshevik
<b>Year of distribution</b>	1996	n/a	1995-1996	1999
<b>Irrigated land (ha)</b>	0.43	0.9	0.5	0.11
<b>Non-irrigated (ha)</b>	n/a	0.2	0.9	0.04
<b>Natural grassland (ha)</b>	n/a	n/a	0.1-0.18	n/a

Source: Municipality statistics and interviews; n/a = no information available

In the study villages, land distribution to families was actually organized by heads of clans. In one case, a lottery helped to allocate the land plots to the farmers. In Municipality Kyzyl Suu, land distribution went through three phases, during each phase land plots of different size were distributed.

Almost all interview partners recall the distribution process as fair and equal.<sup>1</sup> This is not surprising in Municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, where land is rather abundant, but a surprise in Municipalities Kyzyl Suu and Bolshevik, where farmers compete for farmland and where land scarcity has already led to severe regional conflicts.

### 3.4.2 Municipality-level budgets

Municipality administrations possess authority over municipality-level budgets. The municipal administrations are entitled to collect five types of tax for their own budgets. According to municipality administrators, the revenue from own resources comes from business tax, vehicle tax, land tax, property tax and rent from the Land Redistribution Fund. Land and property tax seem to provide the largest share to local budgets. In one municipality, fees for street cleaning were also collected.

Besides own tax collection, financial transfers from the central government to local ones constitute the largest share of the municipality budget. All municipality administrations depended on grants from the central government. Local budgets vary between about 4.4 million KZS in Municipality Bulak and 19.6 million KZS in Municipality Bolshevik (Table 3-8). Only about 10 to 20 percent of the municipality budgets was funded by locally collected taxes and fees (Figure 3-7).

**Table 3-8: Municipality budget (in Kyrgyz Som)**

	<b>Ala Too</b>	<b>Bulak</b>	<b>Kyzyl Suu</b>	<b>Bolshevik</b>
<b>Total revenues</b>	7,163,900	4,440,000	n/a	19,647,300
<b>Revenue from local taxes</b>	491,900	409,500	n/a	4,789,800

Source: Municipality statistics and interviews with municipality staff, no data for Municipality Kyzyl Suu available due to absence of financial officer during period of data collection

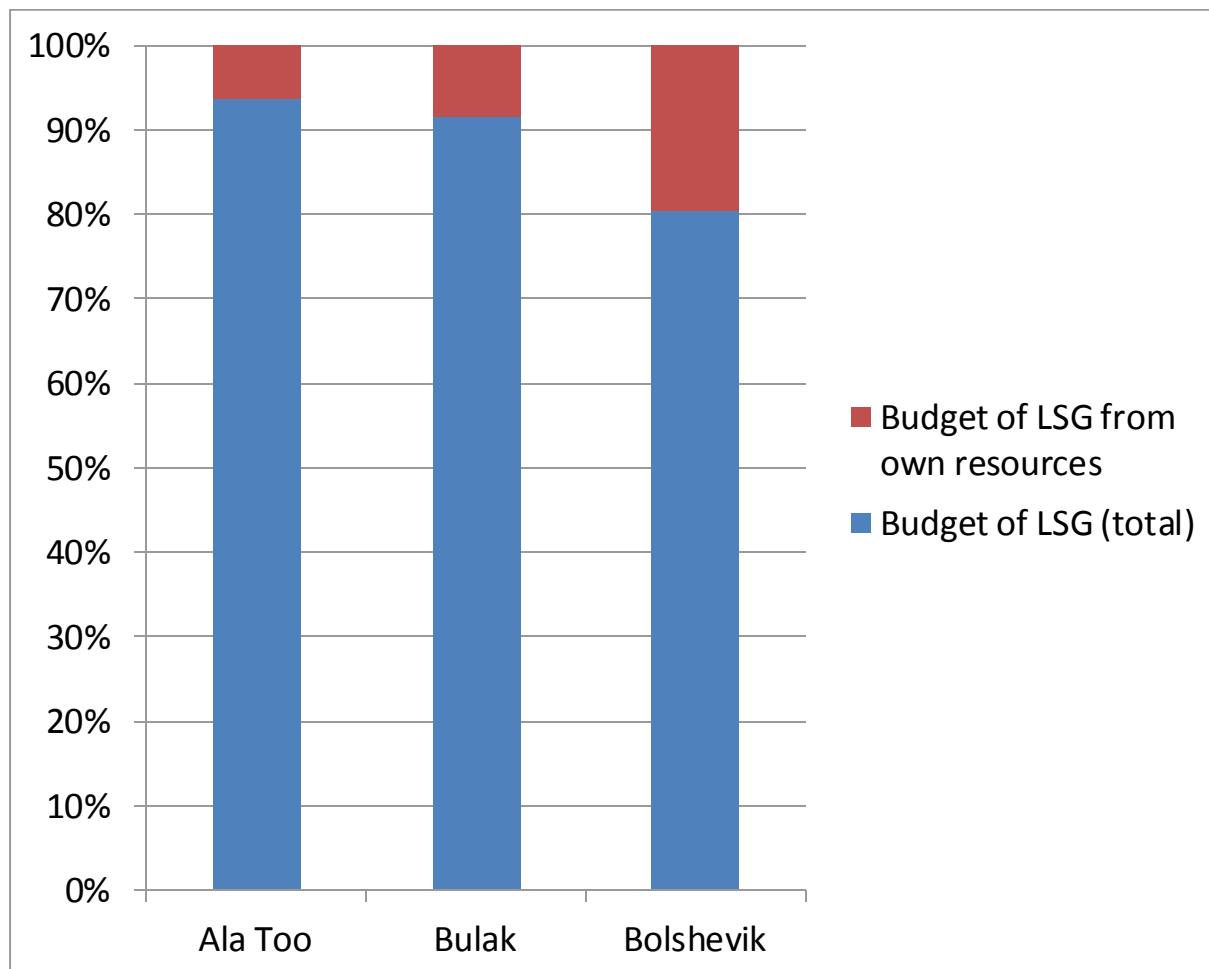
### 3.4.3 Municipality property

Municipality governments have received management rights to municipality-level property. Table 3-9 lists the structures and buildings owned and also shows the respondents' perception of their functionality. The data show that most municipality-owned infrastructure requires moderate or major repairs. The worst conditions were reported in Municipality Bulak, where 80 percent of all municipi-

<sup>1</sup>Only two of the respondents reported to have experienced unjust treatment during land distribution. This would mean that no significant rent-seeking occurred during the land distribution process. This finding is in stark contrast to the generally high levels of corruption observed in the country.

pal property required repair. The best situation was found in Municipality Bolshhevik, where only 58 percent were damaged. Hence, in none of the municipalities did leasing of municipality property generate any income.

**Figure 3-7: Source of municipality revenue (percent) (2008)**



Source: Municipality statistics; interviews with municipality staff; no data for Municipality Kyzyl Suu available

**Table 3-9: Availability and status of municipal property**

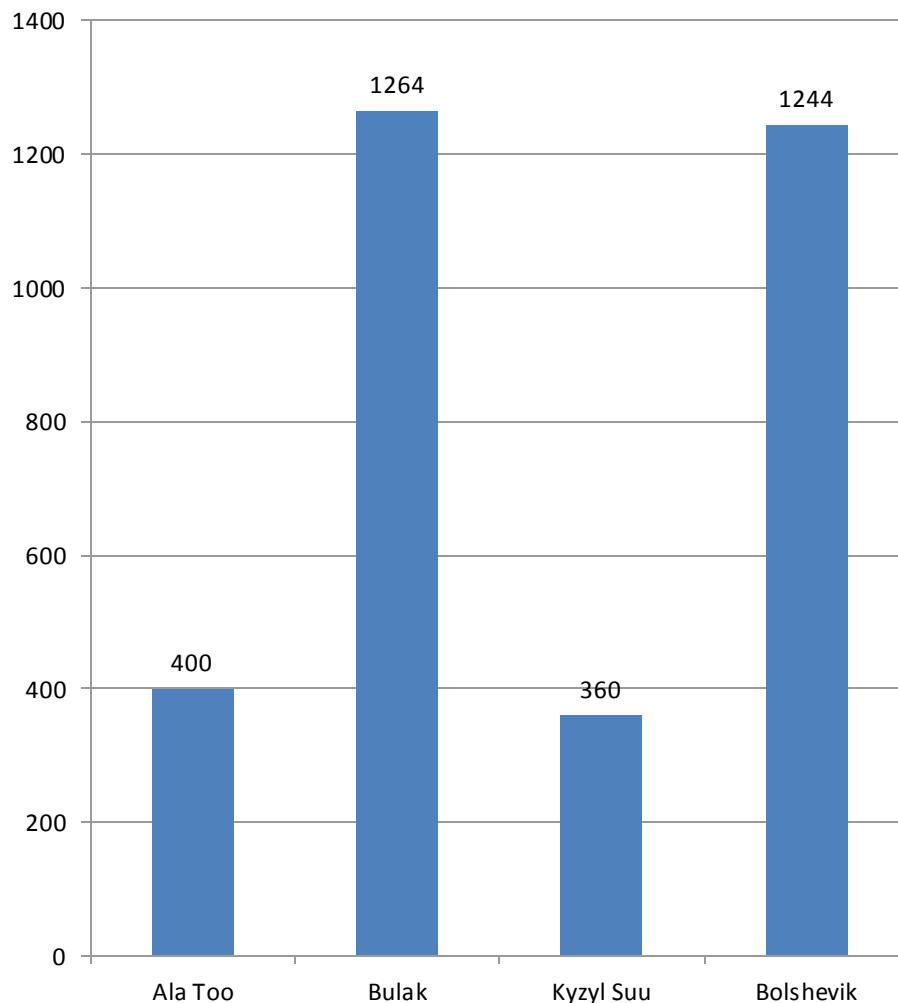
	<b>Ala Too</b>	<b>Bulak</b>	<b>Kyzyl Suu</b>	<b>Bolshevik</b>
Preschool	...	...	...	1
Primary school	2	3	2	2
Secondary school	2	2	2	2
Hospital	...	1	1	1
Auxiliary health worker (health service)	1	...	...	...
Paved roads	...	...	2	1
Water pumps	1	2	3	2
Irrigation channels	2	2	3	2
Community hall	1	...	1	...

1 = operational, 2 = moderate repair required, 3 = major repair required, ... = not available

Source: group interviews in case study sites held by author

### 3.4.4 Land redistribution fund

The municipalities own a share of agricultural land called land redistribution fund (“land fund”). As outlined above, they hold the right to lease this land to municipality residents. Hence, land lease, besides property tax, is a major local source of budget revenue. The size of the land fund determines, to a large degree, the potential municipality budget revenues.



**Figure 3-8: Size of Land Redistribution Fund (hectare) (2008)**

Source: Municipality statistics

However, land lease income varies in the municipalities, depending on the size of the land fund and the agro-ecological conditions, which impact demand for rental land and rental fees (fixed by the central government). The case study found that unlike the south-western regions of the country, there is relatively low demand for crop land in the northern highland communities.

Respondents in the two northern municipalities claimed not to be very interested in crop production. The region is traditionally dominated by animal husbandry, so crop production is not a major activity. Besides traditional orientations – which determine the available knowledge – other reasons for low interest in renting farmland are: inadequate and unreliable irrigation, adverse climatic conditions (short vegetation period, frequent hail storms), lack of transport infrastructure, expensive inputs, lack of machinery (late tillage, low harvests).<sup>50</sup> In the lowland Municipality Bolshevik, in contrast, group discussion participants estimated that 70 percent of citizens rented land from the municipality administration. Such different demand also caused big differences of rental fees: in Municipality Bolshevik, the yearly rent, set by the government, was reported as at least 2500 KZS/ha, compared to only 480 KZS/ha in the highland Municipality Bulak.

### 3.4.5 Pasture

Information on pasture areas was very difficult to acquire, as the interviewed municipality administrators did not possess accurate maps of those pasture areas used by municipality members. In general, the municipal pasture was the area of the former local *kolkhoz*. Until the time of data collection, there had been no update and clear demarcation of the municipal pasture area. Also, only a share of pastures, the winter pastures located near the villages, were under jurisdiction of the municipality administration. Those pasture areas located further were officially managed by district and regional authorities. Local administrations did not possess accurate information on these areas. However, the available, incomplete, municipality statistics suggest that the largest pasture areas were in the northern Municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, while Municipalities Kyzyl Suu and Bolshevik – where livestock production also played a smaller role – had smaller pastures.

## 3.5 Accountability

### 3.5.1 Local government – local state administration

Decentralization does not seem to have changed hierarchical relationships, as already discussed in the literature review in the previous chapter (Chap-

---

<sup>50</sup> Little motivation for using land for crop production was confirmed by the only reliable source of land use information found in Municipality Bulak, where a land use plan had been developed with assistance of an international NGO. In Municipality Bulak, only 202 ha of the land fund's 919 ha were leased. Of this, 88 percent were grassland used for producing much-demanded forage.

ter 2). The respondents reemphasized the supervisory role of the state administrative bodies. When asked about the relationship between the district administration and the municipality government, all municipality administrations described hierarchical relationships with the Local State Administration (LSA), in which they received orders from the LSA which they willingly executed. Municipality administrators seem not to have acquired much confidence in their autonomous role as local policy decision makers. When asked for their main tasks, the secretary of Municipality Ala Too, who represented the absent head of the administration, strongly emphasised that all activities of the municipality administration strictly followed instructions by state administrations and legal provisions. They described their own tasks very vaguely and claimed to execute all legally transferred tasks in “according to the law”:

“You know, the relationship with the state administration is good. We cooperate. They [the district administration’s staff] provide us with the laws and we do everything according to the law. When there is a new law they inform us and we execute it” (Secretary of Municipality Ala Too).

The details of this relationship were explained as follows:

Interviewer: “How do they [district authorities] inform you about new laws?”  
 Respondent: “We go there regularly anyway – once a week – and they tell us what to do” (Secretary of Ala Too).

It is unclear if the municipality administrations feared job loss or any other pressure from the LSA, as the interviewees avoided describing details of their relationship to higher administrations.

The central government held the municipality administrations accountable by directly allocating what could be called donations. The municipality administration received technical equipment, such as agricultural machinery or cars, directly from the central administration.

For lack of transparent allocation mechanisms, municipality administrators were forced to personally apply for such gifts to their community or their administrations. Municipal administrators therefore invested much time for travel – not just to the district administration, but also to state ministries, where they applied for support to the municipality. Municipality administrators hesitated to explain what exactly they discussed on those trips. The head of Municipality Kyzyl Suu, however, reported about his attempts to improve availability of agricultural machines:

“We have heard that soon, there will be some tractors – I think from China – coming. I was therefore already three times in Bishkek to discuss with people in the



ministry. I will try to get one of these tractors for our village. I hope that we will get some support” (Head of Municipality Kyzyl Suu).<sup>51</sup>

This short report by the Head of Municipality Kyzyl Suu indicates that direct interaction and personal relationships to decision makers are important prerequisites for access to support. Further, it shows how the government remains a key distributor of technology and other items required for local economic development.

### *3.5.2 Local government – donors*

While the village governments had received access to independent budgets, these budgets, as was shown in Section 3.4.2, did not allow them to create own development projects but required the village governments to seek external funding. Sources for funding were mainly international NGOs. Local governments worked closely with donors and fully depended on them for funds to provide basic agricultural services and other services.

All municipalities participated in major, nationwide donor programs in cooperation with the Kyrgyz Government. In three of the four municipalities, smaller donor organizations carried out different activities, depending on the municipality administrators’ engagement and success in terms of mobilizing external support.

Access to additional support seemed to depend on the ability of the head of the municipality to attract external funding. The heads of Municipalities Bulak and Kyzyl Suu were particularly aware of this situation and were very engaged in establishing contact with external donors. In Municipality Kyzyl Suu, for example, an entire wall in the municipality administration office was covered with local and international donor contacts. The number of donor organizations which operated in these municipalities evidenced their engagement.

Municipality administrations could not always hold donors accountable. In Municipality Bulak, a donor-initiated infrastructure project had not been adequately implemented. Of the planned 15 water pumps, only 3 worked, and large parts of the central village remained without drinking water – even though citizens had contributed the prescribed amount to the project costs. In this specific case, the municipality administration was of the opinion that planning problems had led to the failure of a drinking water pump rehabilitation and construction project. The municipality administration

---

<sup>51</sup> This strategy seems to have been successful, as the author, during her next visit to the municipality witnessed the arrival of a new tractor in the village, which was highly welcomed by the population.

expressed great frustration that they did not possess any means to enforce the appropriate repairs and execution of the project.

### 3.5.3 Local government – citizens

At the time of data collection, municipality mayors had been elected and were confronted with high expectations from the electorate. All interviewees remembered the pre-independence period for its prosperity and great improvement of living conditions. They therefore expressed dissatisfaction with the current living conditions, which they considered to have drastically deteriorated. A respondent in Municipality Bolshevik – the only municipality with paved streets – reported angrily while referring to the now potholed road:

“In Soviet times we had cars that came here and cleaned the streets. Now with those holes and lack of repair it looks like Iraq here!” (Host family member in Bolshevik)

Citizens considered the municipality administrations responsible for providing all municipality services to which they had had access during the Soviet period and therefore blamed them for the decrease in service availability and derelict infrastructure, as well as for all sorts of increased costs. Hence, there was a widely held belief that the municipality administrations performed inadequately.

Municipality administrations, indeed were observed to experience great difficulties holding citizens accountable and enforcing regulations and agreements. In Municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, for example, citizens dug irrigation channels that crossed agricultural land owned by others. In Municipality Ala Too, I observed a wealthy livestock owner family herd their own horses on the communal winter pasture during the summer season which was by neighbours considered to negatively affected the productivity of the precious winter pasture, endangering the availability of winter forage for the entire village. Also, in all municipalities the administration reported of problems with enforcing tax payments or various individual contributions by households to community-wide projects, e.g. for the nationwide drinking water project or the *Village Investments Project*, or enforcing collective work for cleaning silted irrigation channels.

The relationships between municipality administrations and citizens depended on village history, family relationships and personal attitudes of the mayors and their staff. In Municipality Ala Too, there was a deep divide between the supporters of the previous head of the municipality (who had been forced to leave his office after allegations of selling kolkhoz machinery for his individual benefit) and the supporters of his successor. In this municipality, many reported of specific support going to the current

mayor's family, who also represented the municipality's economic elite. Those who did not belong to the network of the current mayor felt disadvantaged:

"They [the municipality administration] do nothing for us – it's like a mafia. They only serve themselves!" (Municipality council member in Ala Too)

In Municipality Bulak, the municipality administration struggled with the economic village elite:

"He [the mayor] is a good man, but has no power against the rich" (Citizen interview Municipality Bulak).

Fieldwork suggests that the village councils lack oversight over the municipality administration. Municipality councils could not hold municipality administrations accountable. While there was some variation, the relationship between citizens and the municipality councils was very bad in all study cases and according to all respondents without exception.

The councils were considered powerless by all respondents who gave specific information on the council. The work of the councils – whose tasks were fully unclear to the interviewed respondents – was therefore evaluated very negatively. In none of the villages was the local council described as having effective influence over the activities of the administration. Most citizens had great difficulties recalling the names of the municipality council members:

Interviewer: "What do you think of the work of the municipality council?"  
Respondent: "I have never heard of any of their activities" (Citizen interview Municipality Ala Too).

However, in most cases, the municipality administrations cooperated tightly with those members of the community who got engaged. Hence, in almost all municipalities, good relations between community-based groups and the municipality administration were reported.

### **3.6 Decentralized service provision**

#### *3.6.1 The provision of agricultural services*

The following section documents the availability of agricultural services at each study site and the different roles providers had in service provision. It concludes with an assessment of citizen service satisfaction based on service user perceptions. For many details, particularly for payment regulations, specific information was difficult to access, because service users were not able to distinguish between specific service fees and taxes. Who

charges fees for what specifically was often completely unclear to the farmers.

A comparative description of different services requires some generalizations. The findings are summarized in Table 3-10. It combines respondent information on service provision locations and the payment regulations for each service. Service payment regulation was chosen as the descriptive variable, as this allows to display information on all parties involved in the provision of the respective service. If payment for services is private only – which is indicated in the table by “Pr”, then there is no further subsidy or support for that service. If payment for the service is indicated by “Pu, NGO”, then the service is paid jointly by the state and an NGO; for example, the service might be provided by NGO staff or the NGO might support maintenance or construction of infrastructure necessary to provide the service, e.g. an irrigation channel.

The agricultural service provision analysis shows that (i) eight agricultural services are available and accessible to farmers; (ii) not all services are available in all municipalities; (iii) services are provided by different actors, sometimes jointly; (iv) gaps occur in the provision of services which were privatized.

The services are financed by four main providers: local state authorities and Local Self-governments (“Pu” for public), international and local NGOs (“NGO”), private service users (“Pr”), local service user groups (“Pr\*”), or by cooperation of two or more of these actors. Most services are provided at the municipality level (“M”), some at the district and regional level (“D” or “R”) and some are not available at all (“...”).

Some services were available at all study sites – either directly in the study municipalities or at the nearest district centres – and provided by the same service provider (group), using the same payment scheme. Especially pasture and land administration, herding services and veterinary services.

- Pasture and land administration documents were issued by the municipality administration (“M”). The documents had to be complemented by further registration at the State Property Registry located at district levels (“D”). Only in Municipality Bulak was land reportedly registered directly at the district administration, because one resident of the municipality worked there and some land renters referred directly to him for land registration issues. Service payment was therefore shared between state bodies who provided staff for these services (“Pu”) and payments by farmers (“Pr”).
- The state-subsidized procurement of agricultural inputs was also available in three of the four study municipalities. Municipality administrations distributed a limited amount of seeds to crop producers. Hence, the service costs were shared between state bodies (“Pu”) and farmers

(“Pr”). Why in Municipality Kyzyl Suu subsidized inputs were accessible only through the district administration could not be clarified.

- Besides, non-subsidized inputs – criticized for high costs – were available from input retail traders in all district centres. The inputs are paid by private farmers who purchase them.
- Herding services were provided across all study sites in the same fashion. The livestock owners who used the village-adjacent pasture formed a group out of which one member was responsible for daily herding on a rotational basis. The service costs were therefore carried by livestock owners (“Pr”). In Municipality Bolshevik, such herding did not exist, because this municipality, located in the crop-dominated lowlands, had no direct access to sufficient village-adjacent pastures and animals were attended throughout the year by hired herdsman on pastures several dozens of kilometers away from the municipality.
- Herding services during summer on remote pastures were offered by private herders and paid by livestock owners (“Pr”). During the summer grazing period from May to October, herders attended a larger group of animals belonging to small-scale livestock owners. The herders were paid a fixed fee set by the municipality administration.

Heterogeneity of a service which existed in all municipalities was observed in the veterinary service sector:

- Veterinary services (basic vaccination for five selected diseases) were provided in all municipalities. At the study sites, different service providers offered this service: in Municipality Bulak, a private veterinarian and veterinary para-professionals<sup>52</sup> in the other municipalities. For the five mandatory vaccinations – which were subsidized by the state – livestock owners paid a very moderate fee directly to the service providers in charge of vaccination. The fee for vaccination was fixed by the district divisions of the State Veterinary Department, which also provided the vaccines. The service providers were also in charge of blood tests for brucellosis, for which they took a service fee. It was difficult to explore the actual payment mechanism. Some irregularities and opaque payment regulations were obvious: at least in Municipality Kyzyl Suu

---

<sup>52</sup> “Veterinary paraprofessional: means a person who ... is authorised by the veterinary statutory body to carry out certain designated tasks (dependent upon the category of veterinary para-professional) in a territory, and delegated to them under the responsibility and direction of a veterinarian...”. (World Organization for Animal Health 2010: n.p.)

and Bolshevik it seems that the service providers charged service users also for the costs of the subsidized vaccines.

- A slightly wider range of vaccines and veterinary drugs was only available in Municipality Bulak. The local private veterinary clinic purchased drugs from a veterinary wholesaler in Bishkek. It is unclear to which extent the clinic sold the subsidized vaccines. However, livestock owners paid privately for these drugs.

Privatized services were found to be insufficient. They were either absent or provided by NGOs, commercial service providers or privately, by means of self-help:

- Credit services were provided either by private banks (located in the district capitals) or NGOs who supported the municipality with self-help programs which motivated the formation of community-based groups. In Municipality Ala Too and Bolshevik, credit services were available only from private banks. Service costs are therefore carried by private actors (“Pr”). In Municipalities Bulak and Kyzyl Suu, the service was provided by NGO-initiated self-help groups. Since NGOs supported the initiation of these groups through training and kept them operating through continuous staff support and advice – for which the service users did not pay – the service costs were carried by “NGO” and “Pr”.
- Rural advisory services were – if provided at all – only available from NGOs. These services existed only in Municipality Bulak and Kyzyl Suu and were fully financed by the supporting organisation. The service costs were therefore paid by “NGO”. However, there was little knowledge of these services and they seem not to reach the entire municipality. In Municipality Bulak, two providers of agricultural advice operated: first, a small international NGO which sporadically donated seeds and offered training, when the trainers were in the country – about once a year. The donor-supported rural advisory service also seemed to hold sporadic trainings. It was also reported that agricultural advice was available in the district capital of Municipality Ala Too. However, none of the respondents ever had direct contact with this service provider.

A further example of an insufficient service was irrigation, which was unavailable in Municipality Kyzyl Suu and very dysfunctional in the remaining municipalities:

- Irrigation services were available in three of the four municipalities. Different payment schemes were used. In Municipality Ala Too and Bolshevik, the irrigation fee was paid by land owners (“Pr”). In Municipality Bulak, irrigation seemed to have been paid by the municipality

budget (“Pu”). The municipality administrations had received funds to restore the irrigation infrastructure from the *Village Investments Project* run by ARIS, which was already discussed above. To acquire these funds, land users had to contribute collective labour to the restoration. Service costs for infrastructure were therefore shared between “Pr” and “NGO”. Municipality Bolshevik was the only location where a Water User Association (WUA) existed and actively managed the irrigation system. In Municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, these organizations existed only on paper. Appointed water managers (*murabs*) distributed water during the irrigation season.

- The absence of organized irrigation services in Municipality Kyzyl Suu resulted from a full breakdown of the irrigation system. The location of the municipality residents’ fields next to a river allowed that land owners dug – in a non-organized manner – irrigation ditches between the river and their fields.

**Table 3-10: Local-level agricultural service provision**

Service	Municipality					Agrarian Policy Concept
		Ala Too	Bulak	Kyzyl Suu	Bolshevik	
Irrigation service	Location of service provider	M	M	...	M	n/a (water basin level)
	Payment	Pr	Pu	Pr	Pr	Pr*
Infrastructure	Payment	NGO, Pr	NGO, Pr	Pr	NGO, Pr	Pr*, NGO, Pu
Agricultural input	Location of service provider	D	D	D	D	n/a
	Payment	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr
Agricultural inputs (subsidized government program)	Service provider	M	M	D	M	M
	Payment	Pr, Pu	Pr, Pu	...	Pr, Pu	Pr, Pu



Veterinary service	Location of service provider	M	M	M	M	n/a
	Payment	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pr	Pr	Pu, Pr
subsidized vaccines only	Payment		(P), Pr, NGO			Pr
curative services and extended vaccination	Payment		(P), Pr, NGO			Pr
Land administration	Location of service provider	M	(M), D	M	M	M, D
	Payment	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr
Pasture administration	Service provider	M, D, R	M, D, R	M, D, R	M, D, R	M, D, R
	Payment	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr	Pu, Pr
Agricultural training	Location of service provider	D	M	M	...	n/a
	Payment	...	NGO	NGO	...	Pr, NGO

Credit service	Location of service provider	D, M	M	M	D, M	n/a
	Payment	Pr, Pr*, NGO	Pr*, NGO	Pr*, NGO	Pr, NGO, Pr*	Pr, Pr*
Herding service (herding on remote summer pastures)	Location of service provider	M	M	M	M	n/a
	Payment	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	n/a
Herding service (herding of dairy cows on village-adjacent pastures)	Location of service provider	M	M	M	...	n/a
	Payment	Pr*	Pr*	Pr*	...	n/a

Location of service provider: M = Municipality; D = District; R = Region; n/a = not specified; Payment: P = Private farmer / service user; Pu = Public budget; NGO = Local or international NGO; Pr\* = Service user group / self-help group

Source: service user interviews, group interviews, municipality administrator interviews

### 3.6.2 Formal rules versus local practice

The right-hand column in Table 3-10 displays the service provision schemes proposed in the *Agrarian Policy Concept* and the *law On unions (associations) of water users* (2002) in a simplified form. A comparison of the service provision prescribed in these documents and the empirical information shows that a number of services are not provided according to legislation (see a detailed outline of the task distribution in Section 2.4.1). This mainly refers to privatized services and community-based irrigation service provision.

The provision of private agricultural services is only in its infancy. Of those services for which private provision was planned – input provision, veterinary, credit, and agricultural extension – support by donors or the state was necessary in all cases.

First, at all study sites, agricultural inputs (seeds and nitrogen fertilizer) were only available at agricultural markets in the district capitals. Many respondents considered market prices too expensive and relied on the distribution of subsidized seeds by the municipality administration. The resulting service gaps either remained or were partly filled by NGO service providers. Second, although private veterinary services were planned in three of the four villages, there was no professional private veterinary service which provided the full range of services. The para-veterinarians in Municipality Ala Too, Kyzyl Suu and Bolshevik delivered only the prescribed minimum of vaccinations according to the orders of the State Veterinary Department. An exception was the veterinary service in Municipality Bulak, staffed with a fully trained private veterinarian who provided a range of services far beyond the regular minimum vaccination. He received financial support from several sources: two NGOs (one had contracted him with providing additional veterinary services to the municipality and a second one had provided a refrigerator) and the municipality administration (which co-financed his assistant from the municipality budget). Third, the *Agrarian Policy Concept* allocates credit provision to private banks. In two municipalities, banks in the nearby district capitals were reported to provide credit. However, in all municipalities credit at affordable rates was available from NGO-supported self-help groups. These groups were organized under poverty-eradication programs, because lending conditions of private banks were not adjusted to the low agricultural incomes of most respondents at the study sites. Fourth, a private agricultural extension service as envisaged in the *Agrarian Policy Concept* was not available in any municipality. In two of the municipalities, the service was offered by NGOs. In the two remaining ones, no access to agricultural extension services existed at all.

A second important deviation between prescribed provision responsibility and actual practice is the absence of community-based groups – in other words, Water User Associations – for the provision of irrigation services. In three of the

four study municipalities, irrigation management was not organized by Water User Associations as prescribed by the *law On unions (associations) of water users*. Water User Associations existed only on paper. Water users were not involved in irrigation management, but the municipality administrations determined a water manager who was in charge of water distribution (Municipality Ala Too and Bulak). In addition, access to irrigation water was achieved by means of self-help, including irregular, individual digging of irrigation channels (observed in Municipality Ala Too and Bulak). In Municipality Kyzyl Suu, irrigation water use was not coordinated or specifically provided in any way, since the municipality's fields were located next to a river and irrigation water was drawn individually directly from the river. An exception is Municipality Bolshevik, where a Water User Association existed. This, however, was not a fully functioning community-based organization, but the renamed irrigation department of the former local collective cotton farm from the Soviet period. Two of the former collective farm's engineers had, under the new name of "WUA" (Water User Association), remained in office and sought to maintain irrigation water services for the community. Reportedly, they did this without sufficient funds, received very low wages and faced continuous struggle with water users who rejected irrigation fee payments.

A third deviation from the Agrarian Policy Concept until 2010 is the lack of several mentioned services: in none of the study sites were pesticides, artificial insemination, machinery services,<sup>53</sup> improved livestock breeds or improved seeds available.

### 3.7 Service evaluation

**Table 3-11** shows service user satisfaction on a Likert scale. Adapted to school marks in Kyrgyzstan, the scale ranges from 5 for "very good" to 1 for "very bad" or "not available". The service ranking was carried out during group interviews held in each municipality.

During the rating, best average results were found for dairy cow herding with an average of 5 ("very good"), which is closely followed by veterinary services. Worst average ratings were given for irrigation and credit services. Best individual rates received veterinary services in Bulak, and agricultural training in Bulak and Kyzyl Suu. Worst individual ratings were given for irrigation in Municipality Kyzyl Suu and Bolshevik, agricultural training and credit services in Municipalities Ala Too and Bolshevik. The available data allow the

---

<sup>53</sup> In Municipality Kyzyl Suu, it was reported in a group discussion that a machinery cooperative existed, but asked for specific service providers, respondents did not refer to this cooperative anymore. It is therefore likely that this service was provided only to members of the cooperative and not further acknowledged.

identification of two “best” or “worst” performing municipality in terms of service quality. Two of the municipalities (Bulak and Kyzyl Suu) reached the same rating of 3.4, which was followed by a rating of 2.9 for Ala Too and 1.6 for Bolshevik.

However, the average service ratings in each study site are misleading and do not allow conclusions on the general quality of service provision in the specific municipality because there is a strong variation in the evaluation of most services, for example irrigation, agricultural training and credit services (with a width of five and four grade points) across the study sites. Only for dairy cow herding, which was rated “very good” in all sites (where it was provided), there was no variation.

**Table 3-11: Service users’ service quality evaluation**

Service	Ala Too	Bulak	Kyzyl Suu	Bolshevik	Average grading for service
Irrigation	3	4	1	1	2.3
Agricultural inputs	3	2	2	3.5	2.6
Veterinary service	4	4	5	3	4
Pasture administration	n/a	3	3	n/a	n/a
Agricultural training	1	5	5	1	3
Credit services	1	4	3	1	2.3
Herding service (on summer pastures)	3	4	n/a	n/a	3.5
Dairy cow herding service (self-help)	5	5	5	...	5
<b>Average grading for service provision to municipality</b>	2.9	3.4	3.4	1.6	

5 = very good; 4 = good; 3 = average; 2 = bad; 1 = very bad or not available; n/a = no information provided during group interview

Source: group interviews in case study municipalities

Also, do the average service ratings not allow generalizations because of strong variation between the study sites. Greatest grading differences across the study sites occur for irrigation services, credit services and agricultural trainings. Mid-

range differences are found in agricultural input provision, veterinary service, and summer herding services. There are two possible explanations for the local difference in rating for the same service. First, the different ratings between the study sites might result from the fact that several services are provided in very different ways and by service providers with very different characteristics. For example, credit services are provided both by private banks at very high interest rates but in some study sites also by NGOs engaged in poverty eradication at comparatively low interest rates. Hence, the mode of service provision, mainly determined by the external service provider, plays an important role for service satisfaction.

Second, differences in service ratings might also be impacted by different service evaluation criteria of the service users. In Municipality Bolshevik, for example, irrigation service was, based on my observations, compared to all other study sites best working by far. Participants in the Bolshevik group discussions, nevertheless, rated that service very bad. This can be explained by a high standard of irrigation services which the respondents knew from the pre-independence period when the municipality was part of a large-scale and highly productive cotton production *sovkhos* (state farm). Then, irrigation was very well managed and compared to that respondents perceived the current quality of irrigation very bad.

In several cases, grading during the group interviews differed from quality assessments during individual household interviews, from information given by local administrative staff and, again, from the author's observations. During an interview at the municipality administration in Bulak, for example interviewees reported of frequent problems with the absence of animal owners who were in charge of herding the local herd of dairy cows. Nevertheless was that service rated "very good" by the members of the group interview. A similarly puzzling observation was made in Municipality Ala Too where the local veterinarian appeared to possess barely any qualification and had only sporadic access to vaccines. Respondents nevertheless rated the provided veterinary services "good".

This suggests that service evaluation is strongly driven by individual evaluative criteria by the participants of the group interview session during which the rating was performed. Those individual evaluative criteria might not be always service quality but for example amount of service fees or personal relationships with the service provider.

### 3.8 Discussion and Conclusions

A multiple case study explored the impact of decentralization on municipality-level availability and provision of agricultural services. It first explored the way how decentralization impacts actors' accountability relationships, access to power resources and distribution of agricultural service tasks; and second, the

availability and provision modes of agricultural services at municipality-level; and service user satisfaction. The study finds that local governments' activity and the ability of municipality administrators to mobilize external funding, is the most important governance factor which impacts agricultural service availability.

My data show that a large number of agricultural services, which the Kyrgyz government has considered as important drivers of agricultural development in its Agrarian Policy Concept, are not or only insufficiently accessible to many farmers in the four study sites in rural Kyrgyzstan.

The Agrarian policy concept envisaged four groups of agricultural service providers (private enterprises, public administrations, community-based groups and international donor organizations). Public administrations at municipality level were only responsible for pasture and agricultural land administration functions and the distribution of subsidized inputs provided by the central government. Private service providers for which the government had considered an important role did almost not exist and their services, such as agricultural inputs and extended veterinary services including for example artificial insemination, were only demanded and used by a small group of best-off farmers. Important service providers to the agricultural sector were national and international NGOs which supported the creation and operation of micro-finance institutions, provided agricultural extension services, co-financed veterinary services and sought to improve community-based irrigation management. Donors often operated through community-based groups they had formed. Those groups, which existed in larger number, seemed to fail to reach the broader community and several of those groups existed on paper only (water user associations) or did not operate independently from the donor organization (agricultural extension groups). Locally organized community-based groups existed for daily herding of dairy cows only. Therefore, important service providers, usually NGOs, were located outside of the municipality. These organizations sought to replace private service provision (which government and donors had envisaged, but which had not developed).

Municipality administrators had a strong interest in mobilization of support services to the agricultural sector but only an indirect impact on its provision. While village governments had received access to independent budgets, those budgets, did not allow them to create own development projects but required the village governments to seek external funding. My findings show, however, that municipality administrators sought to indirectly impact service availability. They tried to mobilize self-help, which reportedly often failed, and tried to mobilize external support from the central government and donors to the municipality. Heads of the village governments considered it among their key tasks to personally contact funding organizations – including different branches of government – to procure resources or equipment from the government.

The municipality staff had therefore an important role as negotiators between their municipalities and higher administrative bodies, outside donors and programs, bringing services and infrastructure to the villages. The lack of transparent allocation mechanisms – at least for central government donations – requires the municipality heads to personally address governmental bodies. This led to regular travels to different state bodies and high dependence on decisions by specific governmental actors. It is an assumption that this dependency is an effective mechanism by which outside political actors can hold local level administrations accountable.

A key finding of this study is therefore that good relationships with important decision makers located outside of the village, which are typically established by the head of the municipality administration might play the most important role for service availability in a rural municipality. The field work suggests that much of a community's success in attracting services and infrastructure depends on the municipality head's ability to attract external funding.

There is evidence that the characteristics of the service provision transaction, the associated transaction costs and the perception of the scope of benefit foregone determines the availability of services. In the study there was only one service which was fully independently from outside assistance organized by municipality-level actors alone. This service – collective herding of dairy cows on village adjacent pastures – has specific characteristic: a) relatively low transaction costs (low technical complexity of service provision, low degree of expert knowledge needed, no need for the construction of physical infrastructure and financial investment) and b) high benefit foregone to the service users (high dependency on subsistence milk production). Other equally important services such as irrigation were not successfully locally provided because initial investment costs are high and farmers perceive the benefit foregone relatively low given that many farmers lack means to purchase chemical inputs, do not have access to machinery and marketing options and experience, particularly in the highlands, insecurity of weather conditions. A resulting conclusion is that low transaction cost and high benefit foregone lead to local level service provision.

Some of the findings are new but not a surprise. Little impact of local administrations on direct agricultural service provision in Kyrgyzstan could be expected from the literature which has already discussed the limited financial basis of those administrations. It is also not a surprise that private service providers have not emerged in those small, remote and low income rural municipalities. It is a new finding that basically all agricultural services that are not public (in other words land and pasture administration and basic veterinary control) or the already mentioned herding services are either complemented with or fully provided by donor support.

Case studies are difficult to generalize. This also holds for this study. The findings are valid only for specific contexts such as those found in the four study sites in Kyrgyzstan. It is however likely, that those contextual factors, that are



characteristic for poor rural regions, hinder successful service decentralization also elsewhere.

The choice of methods was adequate to the complex and so far under researched field of study. The study confirms the value of an in-depth qualitative approach in order to allow meaningful data interpretation. Only the mix of participatory ranking with individual interviews, a review of statistical information in combination with own observations prevented false conclusions on service quality. It is an important observation that service quality ratings by service users would have, without further data triangulation, led to wrong assumptions on the quality of service provision. Only the combined interpretation of service rating information and information from interviews showed that respondents used a broad set of subjectively important evaluation criteria which were not directly linked to the 'objective' service quality.

The findings have some theoretical implications. Different from initial assumptions to find municipalities in which services are better available than in others, it occurred that in the study sites there were no municipalities which were comparatively better off in terms of service availability.

First, under the given circumstances (low agricultural incomes, very limited local resources and little interest in self-help activities) local governance factors do not seem to independently determine agricultural service provision. The field work leads to a very interesting hypothesis according to which the most important factor of local governance for local service provision and local service access is the municipality head's ability to attract external funding. An in-depth exploration of this relationship might be an interesting line of further research.

Second, the absence of municipality-level service providers hinders positive decentralization effects to unfold. Because the main service providers are community-based groups which are formed by and accountable to the external service providers (mainly donor organizations), there is only very weak accountability relationship between service users and service providers. Instead, the rules according to which service provision is evaluated (and decided about its continuation) are externally designed and do not necessarily reflect service users' evaluative criteria.

Third, service users' ability to assess service quality is impacted by service expectations which are not always based on state-of-the-art scientific or professional knowledge but on experience, instead. This might lead to assessment criteria which differ from professional standards and can result in over- or underrating of service quality. In the study cases the experiences made during the Soviet period and thereafter seem to have formed most expectations used for service evaluation. The service provision conditions during the Soviet period, in other words fully subsidized public provision of services, lead to a) a very limited acceptance of services fee payments and b) a high demand for publicly provided services, by a state organization or the municipality administration. Besides, service users' service evaluation is also impacted by the quality of

services available in the past or outside sources of knowledge on service quality. As outside knowledge is generally not available, local experiences with services which are mainly of low or very low quality impact quality evaluation. Hence, service users are not able to critically assess some of the services, particularly those they had never been provided in an adequate way. Striking was the example of irrigation in Municipality Bulak where some service users considered two days of access to irrigation water during vegetation period for they potato fields appropriate.

My findings call the general superiority of service users' ability to judge local services quality into question if service users' possess access to only limited information. They therefore possess incomplete knowledge. Service decentralization might, under such conditions, lead to service quality decay because knowledge gap at the side of service users hinder them to assess service quality. The theoretical implication is that service user evaluation might lead to low quality standards for service provision if service users do not have access to state-of-the-art knowledge on service quality and cannot use this information for evaluation.

Fourth, many of the proposed benefits of decentralization are based on the premise that it brings local decision makers closer to the constituencies they serve. Implicit in this are assumptions about the nature of information available to local decision makers, the presence of effective channels for the public to express preferences and concerns, and the incentives that motivate decision makers to respond. Each of these assumptions leads to specific conclusions regarding the benefits of decentralization; taken together, the resulting argument is compelling: local decision makers have access to better information on local circumstances than central authorities, and they use this to tailor services and spending to local needs and preferences; the public provides input to local decision-making processes and holds local decision makers accountable for their actions; and administrative autonomy creates space for learning, innovation, community participation and the adaptation of public services to local circumstances. (Khaleghian 2004) However, those theories do not apply to the observed processes in Kyrgyzstan.

The study has revealed the important role donor-driven reforms play for decentralization reforms in the Kyrgyz agricultural sectors. Implementation of donor-programs by means of community-based groups is one of the key strategies employed. It has also shown that specific and in-depth studies on the donor-municipality relationship inherent in decentralization in Kyrgyzstan in order to understand the specific outcomes of decentralized service provision are needed. Hence, the following sections study the most recent major donor-driven agricultural service support program in Kyrgyzstan: An approach to implement community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in the Kyrgyz pasture sector.

## 4 Improving the sustainability of pasture use in Kyrgyzstan. The impact of pasture governance reforms on livestock migration<sup>1</sup>

### 4.1 Introduction

Agropastoralism is a key agricultural activity in Kyrgyzstan (41°00'N; 75°00'E). An average altitude of 2,750 meters (Fitzherbert 2006: 2.2) and about 9.1 million hectares of natural pastures make transhumance the most important livestock production system in the country. Over the past 50 years, the procedures and responsibilities for the allocation of usufruct rights to pastures have experienced considerable modifications. As a consequence, herders' migration patterns changed. Prior to independence in 1991, large-scale livestock production was managed by *kolkhoz* (collective farms) and *sovkhos* (state farms), which organized annual migratory livestock movements. Winter grazing locations were pastures or harvested crop fields close to settlements at lower altitudes. Between May and October, herders travelled to summer pastures at altitudes of about 1500-2500 m asl (Farrington 2005) or higher (Fitzherbert 2006). On their journey during spring and autumn, they passed pastures at intermediary altitudes. Migration of livestock was compulsory and strictly enforced by *kolkhoz* management (Wenzel 2004). After independence in 1991, the *kolkhozes* and *sovkhos* were dissolved and the pasture use management structure became fundamentally altered.

In the post-Soviet era, formal procedures for allocation of usufruct rights to pastures have significantly changed twice. In 2002, reform legislation introduced individual pasture lease rights. This reform was influenced by classical property rights theory (Demsetz 1967), according to which the commons are considered open-access areas and are subject to inevitable overexploitation by free riders (Hardin 1968). In 2009, a new law introduced a system of community-based natural resource management, under which pasture access is to be managed by local user groups. This reform followed a new "policy consensus" (Mosse 1997, see also Agrawal 2001; Blaikie 2006; Pincus 2001), which builds on common-pool resource theory influenced by the works of Wade (1988) and Ostrom (1990). This theory acknowledges the possibility of sustainable self-governance of common-pool resources by user groups if specific success factors

---

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a slightly revised version of Crewett (2012) published in *Mountain Research and Development* 32 (3), 267–274.

that prevent free riding and allow for community participation are met (Agrawal 2001; Dietz et al. 2003; Gruber 2010; Ostrom 1990).

## 4.2 The debate on migration

Different legislation can have different effects on the mobility of agro-pastoral households. The post-Soviet pasture legislation in Central Asia has had different impacts on households' migration decisions. Important factors were found to be local conditions, such as grazing pressure, household economic status (Farrington 2005; Kerven et al. 2004; Kerven et al. 2011; Robinson et al. 2010; Steimann 2011; Steimann 2012), and local administrative practices (Behnke et al. 2005; Dörre 2012). However, post-Soviet pasture management reforms are generally seen as having limited livestock mobility (Robinson et al. 2003). In particular, privatized pasture use has been discussed as an obstacle to migratory movements, as it is seen to lead to a permanent fragmentation of pastures that is inconsistent with the flexible use patterns of mobile herders (Robinson et al. 2010). This argument has also influenced the debate on the Kyrgyz pasture legislation.

During the debate on the second pasture reform in Kyrgyzstan, international policy advisers and the Kyrgyz government held the view that the 2002 legislation had hindered sustainable pasture use. Since independence, the decreasing number and range of seasonal livestock movements, along with overstocking near villages and underuse of pastures located at greater distance from the settlements have been reported (Schillhorn van Veen 1995; Wenzel 2004; Fitzherbert 2006; World Bank 2004). According to official data from the MAWRPI, this has led to worrying conditions in the pastures: severe degradation was registered on 25 percent of all pastures (MAWRPI et al. 2008: 9). Data for 2005/2006 from the Kyrgyz State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property (*GosRegist*) indicate that 27 percent of the pastures contain large amounts of inedible species, 19 percent are eroded, and 33 percent are substantially degraded (USAID 2007: 3).

Administrative procedures are believed to be complicated and to cause high transaction costs for potential leaseholders. International policy advisers and the government have identified the formal pasture law with its fragmentation of administrative control over pastures as the "root of the degradation problem" (MAWRPI et al. 2008: 6; World Bank 2007a; see also World Bank 2007c: 53). Impractical and slow administrative procedures, unclear administrative responsibilities, and expensive fees have been discussed as the main causes for abandonment of summer pasture use (World Bank 2007, 61). However, the case study reported on here does not support this view.

This chapter has two objectives: First, it studies the impact of the 2002 lease-based pasture law on migration decisions. Second, in consideration of those

findings, it discusses the likely effects of the 2009 community-based reform approach on migration.

### 4.3 Methods and case study selection

An exploratory single case study (Yin 1993) was conducted in Bulak municipality in Naryn *Oblast* (Region) in order to assess the linkage between administrative practices, working rules for pasture access, and herders' mobility. The case study location was selected from a set of five municipalities in which group and individual interviews were held and municipality data were collected during a preliminary study in 2008. Two of the communities had a comparatively strong focus on agro-pastoral livestock production and a large pasture area endowed with all three pasture types (winter, intensive, and summer pastures). Of these, Bulak was selected because its remote summer pastures were not located near big roads, which was assumed to affect migration decisions (for example, by reducing income opportunities from trade), but roads to the remote pasture areas were traversable. Bulak, located about 2,300 meters above sea level, is part of the Northern Mountain region of Kyrgyzstan, which is characterized by high altitude, remote location, and high livestock numbers (Schuler et al. 2004: 2-6). One third of the Kyrgyz pasture area (30.4 percent) is located in Naryn Region (*Oblast*); due to a low population density, the pasture availability per pastoralist is 44.86 ha (Kulov 2007: 4), the highest in the country.

The grazing area of Bulak municipality includes 17,369 ha of village-adjacent pasture and 39,710 ha of remote pasture. Of this, 89 ha of village-adjacent pasture and 3,980 ha of remote pasture were officially rented out in 2009 (data obtained from the office of the Kyrgyz State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property (*GosRegist*) in At Bashy and municipality statistics 2009). In addition, 2,147 ha of intensive pasture were rented out by the *Leskhoz* (State Agency for Forest and Environment) as part of the state forest fund. Group interview data and individual interviews indicate high livestock dependency, as crop production is particularly limited because of unfavorable climatic conditions, a lack of agricultural machinery, and a collapsed irrigation system.

Livestock mobility in Bulak follows the same rotational migration principles that have been described for other livestock-dependent communities in Kyrgyzstan (Schoch et al. 2010; Steimann 2011; Farrington 2005). In 2008, the village had 3,504 inhabitants in 740 households, of which 36 percent were officially classified as poor.

The analysis builds on triangulated data from a content analysis of transcripts of individual interviews and recordings, pictures and documents prepared during group interviews, documents obtained from municipality administrations and the State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property (*GosRegist*) offices, and maps produced by the Kyrgyz State Cartographic Institute (*Goskartografiya*). Between June 2008 and October 2009, 29 semi-structured inter-

views were conducted with livestock owners (N = 25) and administrators from the municipality, *Leskhoz*, and *GosRegist* (N = 4). The semi-structured questionnaires focused on effective working rules for pasture use and access under the 2002 legislation, that is, rules that are “actually used, monitored, and enforced when individuals make choices about the actions they will take” (Ostrom 1990: 51). Interviews were conducted by the author and simultaneously translated into the Kyrgyz language. The transcripts of the interviews were analyzed by means of qualitative content analysis with inductive and deductive coding (Mayring 2004). The data analysis technique was a stepwise constant comparison method used for analysis of and comparison between interviews and documents (Glaser 1965; Strauss and Corbin 1998; for a detailed description of the method applied, see Boeije 2002). Examples for code assignment during the analytical coding process are presented in Table 4-2.

**Table 4-1: Case study data**

Population (2008)	3,504
No of households	740
Household size (heads)	4.9
Livestock ownership (heads/household) (2008)	2.3
Yaks	3.2
Cattle	15.0
Small ruminants	0.2
Horses	
Pasture endowment (ha)(2009)	
village adjacent (winter)	17,368
intensive (spring/autumn)	n/a
remote (summer)	39,710

Sources: municipality statistics 2008, *GosRegist* data 2009, own calculations

**Table 4-2: Coding examples for text segments from interview transcripts**

Respondent statement	Coding categories
<i>“In the past, we had our animals in [the summer pasture] Zhany Zher but when this [closer spring/autumn] pasture was available it was much better to take this”. (contract-holder)</i>	Contraction of amplitude of migration Preference for near pasture
<i>“After the collapse [of the Soviet Union] everyone started to try to get [pasture] land near the village.” (contract- holder)</i>	Preference for near pasture Rush for lease
<i>“Now you cannot use this pasture without lease agreement anymore.” (non-contract holder)</i>	Access depends upon possession of lease contract High demand for pasture contract/Rush for lease Preference for near pasture
<i>“All the closer pastures are rented. Not everyone can use these pastures. But there is enough other place where you can go.” (non-contract holder)</i>	Access depends upon lease contract High demand for contracts Preference for near pastures Choice between contracting and not contracting
<i>“Why did you chose that remote section of the pasture when you made the contract?” Respondent: “Because it was the only part that was still available for rent. All the rest was already rented to someone else.” (contract-holder)</i>	Choice between contracting and not contracting High demand for lease contracts/Rush for lease Preference for near pastures Remote pasture use as second best option

*“Actually everything is rented on our pasture. We tell everyone not to come [to our pasture] (contract holder)*

Self-enforcement of maximum stocking rate  
High demand for lease contracts  
Pasture on high demand

*“Rich people [who were described as contract owners earlier during the interview] use some part of the pasture and say: 'This is our pasture. Go away!' Sometimes they beat our animals.” (non-contract holder)*

“Wealthy occupy pasture”  
Self-enforcement of maximum stocking rate

*„It is better to make a lease agreement for a pasture which is closer to the village, such as [the relatively closer intensive pasture] Itchké, than to go to [the relatively far summer pasture] Ak-Say for free. Ak-Say does not cost any rent. I was a herdsman at Ak-Say for 40 years on that pasture. But I think Itchké is better, also with respect to quality. The pasture is easy to be reached by car and only two hours by horse.” (contract holder)*

Preference for near pasture  
Abandonment of migration  
Summer pasture use abandoned for intensive pasture use  
Preference\_pasture quality  
Preference\_convenient access

*“We came to Zhany Zher because of health problems of my father. It is not so high as Ak-Say.”(contract holder)*

Preference\_access medical services  
Preference\_lower altitude  
Preference for near pasture

Source: own representation



#### 4.4 The first pasture reform approach: 1999-2009

According to the Land Code (1999) and the Law on Management of Agricultural Land (2001), pastures are the property of the Kyrgyz state. Pasture rental became possible under the Law on Procedures of Allocating Pastures for Lease and Use, which was adopted by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on June 4, 2002. The law introduced a new administrative management scheme for pastures based on functional categories. Winter pastures were classified as village-adjacent pastures, spring and autumn pastures as intensive pastures, and summer pastures as remote pastures. Administrative control for each pasture category was assigned to a different state body: village-adjacent pastures to municipality administrations, intensive pastures to district administrations, and remote pastures to regional administrations. In addition, larger parts of the pasture fell under the authority of the state agency for environment and forestry (*Leskhoz*).

##### 4.4.1 Working rules for pasture use and access since 2002

In the Kyrgyz pasture sector, common practice or working rules regularly deviate from formal administrative rules (Dörre 2012; Steimann 2011; Steimann 2012). The following section therefore looks at effective pasture use and access rules under the 2002 pasture governance reform and their impact on migration decisions. The analysis shows that administrative hurdles were not the main reason for the abandonment of long-distance migration.

In effect, two types of pasture existed, each with a different access mechanism:

- heavily used village-adjacent winter pastures, relatively close autumn/spring pastures, and relatively close summer pastures, the use of which required a formal lease contract
- more sparsely used remote summer pastures and relatively distant intensive pastures, which did not require a lease contract.

In practice, formal pasture lease was not a general precondition for pasture use, as rent payments were not systematically enforced on all pastures. Particularly on remote pastures, no systematic, effective administrative enforcement of the legislation was in place. Therefore, herders were not forced to carry out difficult administrative procedures to get access to pasture land.

Intensive use of pastures near the village was preferred to migration to remote summer pastures. While variations existed in the chosen livestock migration strategy, herders expressed a strong preference for summer grazing as close to the municipality as possible. Instead of the seasonally differentiated pasture selection of the Soviet period, many herders chose pastures for their proximity to the settlement. The prescribed migration dates, which were annually announced by the municipality administration, were not being followed by many

herders. As a result, many of the areas that were spring and autumn pastures during the Soviet period had become summer grazing locations.

Thus, there was a high demand for nearby pastures. Most intensive pastures were reported to be fully used, and herders perceived all intensive pastures to be rented out. While pastures in low demand were often accessible without an agreement, access to pastures in high demand depended on the ability to obtain a lease.

The interest in pasture leases increased over time. While the demand for pasture leasing was very low shortly after introduction of the reform, and only a few rich herders aimed to secure pasture rights for the best grazing locations, the observation of a growing number of contract holders and the common practice of excluding non-contract-holders has led to the perception that a contract is necessary to get access to a pasture and has increased demand for pasture leases.

#### 4.4.2 *The impact of administrative practices*

Contracting for pasture was considered rather complicated. It involved – depending on whether responsible staff were present, which was not always the case – two or more visits to administrative bodies in the district capital. The conclusion of a lease was in one case described as having taken up to six months.

However, none of the interviewees mentioned difficulties during the administrative process as a reason for not concluding a pasture lease. Also, respondents were aware of the official leasing procedure. The district administration seemed to follow a uniform procedure. There were no differences in descriptions of the lease application procedure by contract holders in Bulak, and *GosRegist*<sup>1</sup> staff in At Bashy, and a discussion by Steimann (2011) in a case study in the same district. Hence, no difficulties in locating the leasing authority were mentioned.

None of the interviewed leaseholders considered rental fees, which are fixed by a state commission, to be expensive and a reason for not concluding a lease. In 2009, official fees in the study area were US\$ 0.06 per hectare per year for remote pastures and for village-adjacent pastures. For intensive pastures, respondents reported paying from US\$ 0.2 to US\$ 0.4. The pasture allocation rules that emerged under the 2002 law were only quasi-lease-based, as the rental fee was set by the administration. The fees were considered so low that a herder chose to abandon the use of a remote pasture free of charge in favor of nearer pasture plots that required lease payments. The cost of using the closer pastures was preferred to the cost and inconvenience of long-distance migration.

Even the small yearly rent payments were not strictly enforced, due to the insufficient staff capacity of *GosRegist*. Many herders did not pay their rent regu-

---

<sup>1</sup> Kyrgyz State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property

larly, or paid only part of it. Rent payment on *Leskhoz* lands was also sporadically enforced, as several respondents who used what they believed were *Leskhoz* pastures neither had a lease nor paid a fee.

Given the low lease fees and sporadic enforcement, the administrative lease procedure did not constrain use of highly desired pasture plots. Rental and administrative fees and procedures did not prevent herders from concluding a lease. Instead, interviewees discussed two reasons for not concluding a contract: First, a pasture lease was sometimes not considered necessary. This was the case on most remote pastures and on some of the more distant intensive pastures, which could be used without a formal rental agreement due to the lack of competition for pasture use and low degree of administrative enforcement. Second, a desired pasture lease was sometimes unavailable because the pasture already was (or was perceived to be) rented. This occurred because *GosRegist* staff limited the number of leases issued for each pasture area according to a predefined official stocking rate. Hence, many herders were not able to establish a formal lease for their preferred pasture plot and were forced to use or rent a plot farther away from the village.

It is noteworthy that leases were mainly discussed as a means to defend pasture use rights against other pasture users, whereas establishment of pasture leases by administrative order was rarely mentioned. Many respondents reported that leaseholders actively excluded non-contract-holders from access to their rented plot. The respondents therefore shared the view that only contract holders could access pastures near the village and that this had increased the demand for pasture leases.

In the case study municipality, the contract was a mandatory means to increase the probability of uncontested use rights to a pasture in high demand. It was not required in order to establish legal rights to the use of pasture in general, as state administrative bodies did not systematically enforce rent payment on all pastures. Pasture leasing was an optional means to establish access rights to relatively nearby pastures. Leases had become an important means of securing usufruct rights to intensive pasture plots.

In the case study area, non-administrative factors were the main reasons for herders to abandon long-distance migration. Herders were strongly interested in keeping travel distances to the grazing areas short. The case study revealed that factors affecting migration decisions included lack of access to services; high individual migration costs, which were further increased by a decay of infrastructure; perceptions of sufficient pasture quality on nearer pastures; and the breakdown of formal and informal enforcement mechanisms for long-distance migration, including pleas by the local administration. In addition, the lease of intensive pastures limited motivation for summer migration by those who held contracts or felt secure in their use rights to specific plots. As no effective seasonal use restrictions for the different pasture types existed, renters, mainly those with smaller herds, remained stationary throughout the grazing season.

#### 4.5 The second reform approach: community-based management

The analysis of the Bulak case showed no direct relationship between high administrative costs that accrue to pasture users and the abandonment of herders' long-distance mobility. While this finding needs to be confirmed by further research, including multiple case studies and additional quantitative studies, one might develop a hypothesis on the effectiveness of the community-based pasture governance reform that is currently being implemented.

On January 26, 2009, the government of Kyrgyzstan issued the *Law On Pastures* (N 30), which shifted responsibility for managing pastures to new community-based user organizations and abandoned the earlier fragmented system of state authority. According to the new law, all pasture users are to form pasture user unions (PUUs), who elect their own executive bodies, called pasture user committees (PCs)<sup>2</sup>. These bodies are authorized to govern the use of pastures independently from state administrative control. The PUUs hold a bundle of rights. Under Article 6, Section 5 of the new law, the Pasture Committees have the right to (1) develop and implement a community pasture management plan and an annual pasture use plan, (2) issue pasture use right certificates (pasture tickets) and collect payments for pasture use, (3) resolve disputes among pasture users, and (4) and carry out investments in pasture infrastructure and maintenance.

If fully implemented, the 2009 law could solve what has been identified as the administrative fragmentation problem. However, based on the case study, one might hypothesize that the localization of pasture administration in municipal-level Pasture Committees and the envisaged simplification of access procedures might not be sufficient to increase livestock mobility. The case study suggests that administrative hurdles, including the need to travel to administrative offices outside of the municipality, were not among the key reasons for the contraction of seasonal livestock movements. It also showed that herders adhered neither to what can be considered traditional seasonal migration rules nor to pleas by the municipal administration.

The findings of this exploratory case study therefore suggest that in order to increase flock mobility under the 2009 reform legislation, investments in infrastructure are key. At the same time, specific migration rules with effective enforcement and sanction mechanisms might be needed. Unfortunately, the current legislation lacks provisions for enforcement of seasonal migration and does not include regulations establishing sanctions. This causes a particular challenge associated with the control function of Pasture Committees.

---

<sup>2</sup> In the published version of this chapter, Crewett(2012), the Pasture Committees are called Pasture User Committees (PUCs). For simplified reading I have used the abbreviation Pasture Committee (PC) throughout this book.

The case study shows that herders have limited interest in traveling to remote pastures due to inconvenient access and absence of services. Hence, Pasture Committees might find it difficult to enforce migration rules and particularly to withstand pressure from local groups or individuals who might have an interest in avoiding migration (for example, influential herders who prefer to use already secured pastures near settlements). Outside assistance might be needed to support the effective implementation and enforcement of migration rules and prevent local pressure group influence. Therefore, rule enforcement might better be backed by a body located outside of the village, such as an umbrella organization of PUUs at the district or regional level. It could serve as a control body – independent of municipality-level pressure group influence – that could effectively control seasonal migration rules. However, such shift of monitoring imposes potential risks of providing new opportunities for rent-seeking, problems of scale and might lead to high transaction cost. However, the mere shift of administrative responsibility to the municipal level, without the establishment of effective independent enforcement bodies, might be insufficient to increase flock mobility.

## 5 Introducing decentralized pasture governance in Kyrgyzstan. Designing implementation rules<sup>1</sup>

### 5.1 Introduction

In 2009, a law “*On Pastures*” was implemented in the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyzstan (henceforth Kyrgyzstan) that prescribed a form of *Community-based Natural Resource Management* (CBNRM). That law signified a drastic reform of property rights over pastures, as it shifted pasture management authority from state administrations to the municipality level and replaced individual leasing, which had been in place since 2001 (Crewett 2012; Dörre 2012; Steimann 2011; 2012), with collective ownership. Hence, pasture management responsibility and the right to allocate pasture-related usufruct rights are now held by newly formed community-based *Pasture User Unions* (PUUs) and their executive bodies, called *Pasture Committees*.

The design and the implementation of the Kyrgyz pasture management reform, of which the new pasture law is a sub-component, was strongly supported by the World Bank. As such, the implementation of this reform is an example for a specific process of institutional design which is common in donor-dependent countries: in this context, implementation refers to the translation of externally designed rules into practice by members of an implementation network, consisting of external and local implementers including administrative policy implementers, donor-agency policy implementers and civil society actors. Such complex processes of institutional design associated with CBNRM implementation are rarely studied in institutional research which mainly focuses on a review of the characteristics of emerging rules.

The following chapter therefore explores the design of implementation rules through the course of donor-driven CBNRM implementation in greater depth. The chapter asks: How and by whom are implementation working rules for CBNRM in Kyrgyzstan being created? In order to allow for a detailed analysis, the study focuses only on the sub-process of the design of *boundary rules* that govern entry into those newly created executive bodies – municipality level Pasture Committees.

Drawing on implementation research (Hill and Hupe 2002; Hill 2003; Maynard-Moody 1989) Section 5.2 adds an improved actor component to Kiser and Ostroms’ leveled approach to the study of nested institutions which allows for a better representation of agency in institutional analysis. Section 5.3 speci-

---

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a slightly revised version of the article Crewett (2015b) which was accepted for publication and published online in *Environmental Science and Policy* (doi:10.1016/j.envsci.2014.12.009). The article is currently in press.

fies the case study setting and analytical methods. Section 5.4 disentangles the implementation action arena and shows how *collective choice boundary rules* emerge as a result of the interplay of multi-level, multi-phased decision making. In Section 5.7 the findings are discussed.

**Figure 5-1: Map of the Kyrgyz Republic**



Source: United Nations Cartographic Section (2011)

## 5.2 Theory and analytical framework

### 5.2.1 Levels of institutional analysis

The remainder of the chapter explores how policy implementers design rules which govern the establishment of an organization. In institutional theory, rules, including norms, conventions and laws, are considered to impact actors behavior. They do so either in the form of internalized shared beliefs which emerge from practice, repetition or normative injunction or from an “immanently normative disposition, that in circumstance X do Y” (Hodgson 2006: 140), but also take the form of externally designed constraints or prescriptions (North 1991). Such rules define the available positions within any an organization, for example the number of members, chairpersons, accountants, etc., who may or may not become a member or hold any other position within that organization, and by

which process individuals get access to any of these positions. Rules which specify the set and number of positions actors may, must or must not hold in a specific action situation are called *position rules*, and rules which define entry and exit conditions for the defined positions, including a) eligibility, b) the processes that determine which eligible participants may or must hold a position and c) how an individual may or must leave a position are called boundary rules (Crawford and Ostrom 1995).

In order to explore rule design during policy implementation, a process in which multiple stakeholders are involved, a leveled analytical approach is required. Kiser and Ostrom have proposed a framework for the study of vertically interlinked and nested rule design (Kiser and Ostrom 1982; Kiser and Ostrom 2000: 57; Ostrom 1990, 1999, 2005). According to their model rule design takes place in rule making situations at different levels. At each of the levels the following three factors come into play: first, *community*, second the *biophysical world* and third, an already existing set of *rules-in-use* which has emerged at a previous level of rule design. Hence, rules for altering rules which define *who* may or must and *how to* change rules are designed at what is called *deeper rule making or choice situations* and are used at *higher level choice situations*. The framework proposes three dependent levels of rule design (from *deeper* to *higher level*: *collective choice*, *constitutional choice* or *meta-constitutional choice situation*) but acknowledges the possibility of a potentially infinite number of nested rule making situations (Ostrom 2005: 58). According to this model rules designed at a *deeper* level constrain rules designed at the following level:

“This nesting of rules at several levels is similar to the nesting of computer languages at several levels. What can be done at a higher level will depend on the capabilities and limits of the software (rules) at that level, on the software (rules) at a deeper level, and on the hardware (the CPR)<sup>2</sup>” (Ostrom 1990: 50f).

In order to explore institutional design during implementation two specifications are needed. First, the relational and vague definition of the potentially infinite number of nested rule making situations (Ostrom 2005: 58) requires a specification of the transaction at the level of institutional choice. Second, policy implementation is in most cases multi-actor or network driven (Hjern and Porter 1981). It is therefore necessary to specify what Kiser and Ostrom call the *community*. In order to acknowledge actor diversity<sup>3</sup> I replace the *community* with what I call *authorized decision makers* – professionals at different levels of ad-

---

<sup>2</sup> Common Pool Resource

<sup>3</sup> Two key aspects are not acknowledged in Kiser and Ostrom’s approach: first, “the processes and mechanisms by which the individual is fundamentally altered” (Hodgson 2007:100) and, second, the impact of the important role of heterogeneity of actors on rule design (documented by Schlager and Blomquist W. 1998; Ruttan 2008).



ministration and other policy-implementing organizations who are legitimized, either formally or informally, to put new regulations into practice and are thereby engaged in institutional design.

### 5.2.2 *Street-level bureaucrats as authorized decision maker*

Policy implementation is the post-legislative stage of decision making during which policies are turned into action. Implementation research has shown that implementation rarely resembles a series of consequential actions but rather “a process of interaction and negotiation, taking place over time, between those seeking to put policy into effect and those upon whom action depends” (Hill and Hupe 2009: 7 quote Barrett and Fudge 1981). I therefore employ a “bottom-up perspective on implementation” (Hill and Hupe 2009: 52) which highlights the role of lowest administrative level policy implementers, so called *Street-level bureaucrats* (SLBs), that is mostly public employees, but also staff of NGOs or other agencies who interact with non-organizational clients on a daily basis and whose task is to implement their agencies’ rules in practice (Lipsky 1980).

SLBs purposefully alter the set of rules they are to implement as a reaction to their working environment: “the decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively become the public policies they carry out” (Lipsky 1980: xii). By definition, SLBs operate at the citizen-state interface characterized by a) relative proximity to clients, including a high frequency of client contacts; b) ambiguous role expectations from the organization they serve<sup>4</sup> and from clients; c) continuous resource and capacity constraints and d) insufficiently defined rules and regulations that fail to provide instructions for all upcoming tasks the SLB has to handle. Logged between the pressure to carry out a task impossible under the given constraints and the endowment of large room for discretionary decision making, they adopt what can be called a “cognitive regularity” (Becker 2004) and develop specific patterns of cognition and behavior that aim at a limitation of their work load, maximization of the available resources and maximization of client compliance with procedures prescribed by their agency. SLBs therefore adjust implementation working rules to their capacities and working conditions by means of *routinization*<sup>5</sup> and also *simplify* their own *mental model* of their tasks (Lipsky 1980).

---

<sup>4</sup> In the remainder of the chapter this organization is called agency.

<sup>5</sup> Lipsky (1980) limits “routines” to behavioural regularities, which is not coherent with much of the literature on the role of routines in organizations. Different from the literature, which looks into routines as an inherent characteristic of organizations, Lipsky’s routines are not the result of collective solutions to problems. Instead, they are more individual, though similar, choices which bureaucrats share.

**Table 5-1: Using the grammar of institutions for the operationalization of analytical situations**

Level of analysis	Transaction
Operational	Use of resource entry and resource management rules, including withdrawal rules
Collective-choice	Design of resource entry and resource management rules, including withdrawal rights by Pasture Committee members
	Use of entry rules to local governance bodies (Pasture Committee and PUU)
Constitutional	Design of entry rules to local governance bodies (Pasture Committee and PUU)
	Employment of rights associated with authority to transfer/devolve resource management rights to local governance bodies by policy implementers
Meta-constitutional	Design of rules that allocate authority to transfer/devolve resource management rights to local governance bodies by law makers

Source: own representation

Table 5-1 allocates the implementation related transaction to the respective levels of the Kiser-Ostrom framework. The table shows that the analytical focus is *collective choice (boundary)* rules which are being designed in the constitutional choice situation.

### 5.3 Method and case study selection

At the time of field research, which was conducted in September and October 2009, ten months after the introduction of the pasture governance reform, no data on the process of Pasture Committee establishment was available. Therefore background expert interviews and own observations during previous field work were used to identify three most different cases (Yin 1993) of Pasture Committee establishment (see Table 5-2).

Pasture Committee establishment was ongoing in all study municipalities. The new law abandoned the previous deconcentrated governance of pasture administration according to which regional (*oblast*) administrations were responsible for leasing summer pastures, regional (*rayon*) administrations for leasing spring and autumn pastures and municipality administrations (*ayil okrug*) for leasing winter pastures (for examples of pre-reform pasture governance see Crewett 2012; Dörre 2012; Kerven et al. 2011; Steimann 2011, and

World Bank 2007a)<sup>6</sup>, what Kiser and Ostrom call the biophysical world, exhibited similar characteristics in all study cases including – high altitude, abundant pasture resources and a large livestock population which is typical for the mountainous regions of Kyrgyzstan (Scholz 1992; Schillhorn van Veen 1995; Schoch et al. 2010). In all cases resident families, except for the poorest of the poor, own livestock and use, either directly as herders or indirectly as users of herding services, pastures for grazing purposes. Therefore, vertical agro-pastoralism, with a migration season from May to October, is the main source of income.

The cases were chosen for their difference in the two remaining analytical aspects of the analytical choice situation explored in Section 2.1: the authorized decision makers involved in the design and the boundary rules they had created (see Table 5-3).

**Table 5-2: Study case characteristics<sup>7</sup>**

Municipality		Ala Too	Bulak	Kara Tash
No of villages		3	1	3
Altitude (masl)		2004	2400	2300
Pasture resource (hectare)		11,000	57,300	52,200
No of animals per household	Large ruminants	3.1	5.8	6.1
	Small ruminants	13	18.9	14.4
	Horses	1.7	3.0	2.3

<sup>6</sup> The 2009 law “On Pastures” replaced the pasture administration regulations of the land code (1999) and the Regulation “On Pasture Lease and Use” (2002) (see details in a review of the legislation by Dörre 2012).

<sup>7</sup> Please note that, as confidentiality was ensured to all municipality-level respondents, the names of the municipalities have been changed. Numbers have been rounded. In addition, pasture area data are highly unreliable as municipality information at that time were erroneous and incomplete. The given numbers therefore summarize information on the entire pasture area including summer, winter and spring/autumn pasture. For Ala Too no information on spring/autumn and summer pasture was available. However, a relative comparability of case studies is ensured as the heads of the agricultural departments of the municipality administrations and pasture users responded relative abundance of available pasture area.

Source: own compilation of statistical records from municipality administrations and official statistics. For municipality Ala Too only data on area of winter pasture available.

Sixteen semi-structured *expert interviews* (Bogner and Menz 2009; Bogner et al. 2009) and *narrative interviews*<sup>8</sup> (Schütze 1983; von Klobuczynski 1999; Küsters 2009) were conducted at the national, district and municipality levels with policy implementers, municipality-level administrators, representatives of the municipality-level administration, a nationwide operating NGO and all locally accessible Pasture Committee members. Qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2004) was combined with stepwise constant comparison methods (Glaser 1965; Boeije 2002). The interviews were complemented by an analysis of the pasture law, the guideline developed by the implementing agency in 2009 (henceforce implementation plan), Pasture Committee membership lists, and municipality level statistics.

**Table 5-3: Case study selection**

<b>Municipality</b>		<b>Researcher's perception of Pasture Committee formation process at constitutional choice level prior to field work</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
Ala Too	Actors	Municipality administration	Own field work
	Boundary rule	No community involvement Pasture Committee was dissolved	
Bulak	Actors	Municipality administration	Own field work
	Boundary rule	Limited community involvement Pasture Committee was not dissolved	
Kara Tash	Actors	Local activists aided by an NGO as part of the NGOs' up scaling activities	Background interview with NGO staff in
	Boundary rule	Locally run Pasture Committee formation Pasture Committee was not dissolved	

Source: own representation

<sup>8</sup> In order to minimize question threat (Foddy 1993) narrative interviews were used in cases when a respondent seemed to feel the topic to be very sensitive.

## 5.4 Exploring the multiple actor action situation for boundary rule design

Case study data showed that boundary rules were designed not only by the law making body, the Pasture Department of the Kyrgyz MAWRPI, who drafted the pasture law, but also by different *authorized decision makers* who created additional sets of *boundary rules* during the process of law implementation. For a better overview, all *collective choice boundary rules* are shown in Table 5-5.

15 boundary rules were identified in total. Among those 4 rules (rules 1, 2, 4 and 14 in Table 5-5) are provisions made in the pasture law; 4 rules (rules 8, 9, 13, and 15) are specifications of the law created by the implementing *Community and Development Agency* (ARIS); and seven rules (rules 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 12) are locally designed by both types of SLBs: ARIS field staff – so called *Community Development Support Officers* (henceforth: ARIS Community Officers) – and municipality level administrators.

### 5.4.1 Formal collective-choice boundary rules for Pasture Committee establishment in the new pasture law

The law “On Pastures” was drafted by the *Pasture Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic* in cooperation with the *World Bank* and was issued on January 26, 2009. It devolved pasture leasing rights from different administrative units to municipality administrations and entitled them to shift pasture allocation authority to community-based *Pasture User Unions* (PUUs) and their executive bodies, called *Pasture Committees*. Pasture Committees hold all executive rights including the right to allocate usufruct rights to pastures<sup>9</sup> and to determine the amount of pasture use fees to be paid by pasture users.

Article 6 of the law defines Pasture Committee *boundary and position rules*: the number of Pasture Committee members has to be uneven, the majority of Pasture Committee members have to be pasture users, and the Pasture Committee must include members of the elected municipality council and the head of the municipality administration. Besides, Pasture Committee members are to be elected by the PUU in which all pasture users are members (see rules, 1, 2, 4, and 14).

### 5.4.2 Collective choice working rules designed by municipality administrations

A first Pasture Committee-establishment phase was kick-started by implementation orders which municipality administrations received from the district (*rayon*) administration offices in spring of 2009 (see Table 5-4, phase I). During that

---

<sup>9</sup> The management implications associated with the governance reform are not discussed in this chapter.

phase municipality administrations experienced a situation which they described as very problematic for both higher administration, but also local pasture users, who expected them to end the confusion over pasture management authority which had grown during 2009. After media had reported about changes in the legislation and modified payment regulations, local pasture users expected higher administration to implement a law for which they did not possess implementation guidelines. Hence, in order to cope with citizen expectations the studied municipality administration used their discretionary power and designed their own *boundary rules* for Pasture Committee establishment.

As will be shown in this section, all studied municipality administrations chose a similar coping strategy: they designed boundary rules which ensured the quick creation of Pasture Committees which – in their view – represented the relevant livestock business actors in the community, to ensure a qualified membership, and which they expected to cooperate well (see rules 5, 6, 7 and 10).

In municipality Ala Too, the administration had initiated one constitutional meeting in July 2009, for which it had selected a group of large-scale animal owners whom they considered to possess expertise in the field and which included the heads of all municipality villages. Other resource users were not involved in Pasture Committee establishment and did not receive information regarding ongoing activities. The interviewed community members considered all participants of that meeting to also entertain particularly good relations with the municipality administration.

In municipality Bulak, the administration pre-selected owners of large herds for a constituent meeting during which Pasture Committee members were elected. Municipality residents reported that poor pasture users who claimed an interest in becoming members were considered ineligible for membership in the Pasture Committee as they were thought not to hold a stake in pasture use and to lack relevant expertise.

In municipality Kara Tash, the administration had shifted Pasture Committee formation responsibility to a particularly active group of herders who created an interim Pasture Committee. The group consisted of small- and medium-scale livestock owners who were friends and neighbors of one of the three village chairmen in the municipality who, at the same time, was the largest livestock owner. Members' selection criterion was described as "people whom we trust" and "people who can work". Pasture Committee members claimed a community meeting to have taken place; however, interviewed community members were not aware of such public meeting.

While the above mentioned process lead to a cut down on the participation of the broader community, the SLBs designed additional locally adapted institutional innovations which increased the participation of particularly relevant pasture users or service providers. In municipality Bulak representatives of the users of all separate mostly used grazing areas were purposefully included in the committee. In municipalities Kara Tash and Ala Too, they ensured the represen-

tation of all municipality villages in the Pasture Committee, key opinion leaders and, in addition, considered the participation of local veterinarians.

**Table 5-4: Phasing of implementation of new pasture law**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Ala Too</b>	<b>Bulak</b>	<b>Kara Tash</b>
Date of Pasture Committee establishment	July 2009	July 2009	November 2008 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Phase I: Self-directed Pasture Committee establishment (January – August 2009)</b>			
First phase implementer	Local Self-government	Local Self-government	Local activists and Local Self-government
Boundary rule by first phase implementer	Individuals appointed by Local Self-government	Elderly and wealthy pasture users, elected by group of selected wealthy large-scale livestock owners	“Active” pasture users from community, whose engagement was motivated by the village chairman
<b>Phase II: After arrival of implementing agency (September 2009)</b>			
Second phase implementer	ARIS Community Officers	ARIS Community Officers	ARIS Community Officers
Dissolution of existing Pasture Committee	No	No	No

<sup>1</sup> This Pasture Committee was founded as a scaling-up activity of a CBNRM program run by a Kyrgyz NGO. The activities of the NGO had already started prior to announcement of the new pasture law.



---

Revised boundary rule by second phase imple- menter	Addition of office holders (Municipality council mem- bers; head of a local develop- ment group), appointed by municipality administration	Addition of office holders (Municipality council mem- bers; head of a local develop- ment group)	Addition of formal office holders (Municipality council mem- bers)
---	--	--	---

---

Source: own representation

### 5.4.3 *The implementing agency as designer of collective-choice boundary rules*

In autumn 2009, a second phase of Pasture Committee establishment started (see Table 5-4, phase II). ARIS management had, in cooperation with the main donor organization, provided their field staff with a formal implementation plan (see column B in Table 5-5) which they were to implement in cooperation with municipality administrations. According to those rules, the Pasture Committee members are to be appointed during a municipality level *PUU Foundation Conference* consisting of elected representatives from all municipality villages. All minority groups are to participate in the election of PUU representatives including non-livestock owners and representatives of all social groups (including the elderly, youth, women, and the poor). In addition, municipality council representatives are to be appointed during a municipality council session. If community participation requirements are not met, Pasture Committee dissolution and a restarting of the Pasture Committee-formation process were prescribed.

## 5.5 **Collective choice working rules – routines designed by the implementing agencies' Community Development Support Officers**

ARIS Community Officers experienced a situation typical for SLBs which was discussed in Section 5.2.2. They faced a mismatch between the tasks for which they were responsible and prescribed rules. The implementation situation the SLBs found at municipality level differed from the assumed situation based on which the implementation rules were drafted. Hence, ARIS Community Officers had to deal with two challenges typical for SLBs: first, at municipality-level they found a number of surprises in terms of outcomes of the first phase of Pasture Committee establishment run by municipality administrations for which there were no specific regulations and second, they had to deal with rules which did not fit the requirements by their clients and their own capacity. As a result they faced performance expectations by their agency that were unrealistic to be fulfilled.

First, all interviewed ARIS Community Officers considered the municipality-run Pasture Committee establishment process from the first implementation phase largely non-participatory: none of the study municipalities had established a PUU, the formal body authorized for Pasture Committee member election, and mainly elderly, wealthy, male livestock owners who, in addition, possessed good relationships with the Local Self-government had become Pasture Committee members. Second, the prescribed starting point for Pasture Committee formation had not been fitted properly into the migration cycle of the pasture users, because of which the overwhelming majority of active herders in two of the study municipalities were on the summer pastures and not accessible by ARIS Community Officers at the time of Pasture Committee formation. Third, the prescribed time plan allowed only six weeks' time for Pasture Committee estab-

lishment activities prescribed in the ARIS implementation plan which included running a household level information campaign, conducting five municipality level meetings in total and formally registering the Pasture Committee. In addition, the ARIS Community Officers viewed the Pasture Committee agency prescribed establishment procedure critically. They considered its scheme, both too complicated and exceeding their capacity and that of those, usually few, community members who got engaged in community activities.

ARIS Community Officers lacked power to successfully negotiate with their agency about a readjustment of task performance expectations. A request that their agency adjusts the time frame according to municipality-level needs was denied by the agency. Hence, they used their room for discretionary decision making and modified boundary rules in order to cope with critical cases. This, as interviews revealed, was accompanied by a modification of their own mental model of their task (see Section 5.6).

As a consequence, ARIS Community Officers designed rules which violated some prescriptions in the implementation plan. Even though they were aware of the problem that preceded the ARIS Community Officers' activities in each municipality, only one meeting had taken place during which the Pasture Committee had been established, and that the participants of those meetings had been hand-picked by the municipality administration, none of the ARIS Community Officers tried to ensure broader community participation in the Pasture Committee establishment process. They neglected community information, did not form a PUU and, most remarkably, did not dissolve the existing Pasture Committees (rule 15).

Instead, ARIS Community Officers developed some *routines* which they recommended in all municipalities. They instructed the municipality administrations to just readjust the composition of the Pasture Committees already formed and to add a certain number of municipality council members (rule 2) and the chairperson of a *Village Development Committees* (rule 3) – *that is community-based organizations* which ARIS staff had formed during their first municipality level project<sup>1</sup>.

The authors' false perception on Pasture Committee dissolution in municipality Ala Too (see Section 5.3 and Table 5-1) resulted from the misinterpretation of a *routine* established by the SLBs: Ala Too municipality administration claimed to have – according to ARIS Community Officers instructions – dissolved the entirely non-participatory Pasture Committee they had formed in the first implementation phase. However, the municipality administration re-established the Pasture Committee in the same composition. The only difference was that for the second Pasture Committee they appointed additional municipality council

---

<sup>1</sup> Village Investments Project I and II (see ARIS 2014 for further information on that project)

members. The community was not better involved, neither informed about the Pasture Committee establishment process.

**Table 5-5: Boundary working rules designed by ARIS Community Officers, municipality administrations and local pastures user compared to prescriptions by government and the implementing agency**

		Formal boundary rules		Working boundary rules in Pasture Committee establishment phase I		Working boundary rules in Pasture Committee establishment phase II
		A	B	C	D	E
Mandatory members in Pasture Committee are the following individuals/ representatives or the heads of the following groups....		Law	ARIS	Municipality administration <sup>AT, B</sup>	Pasture users <sup>KT</sup>	ARIS Community Officers <sup>AT, B, KT</sup>
1	Municipality council members	X	X	X	X	X
2	Head of municipality administration	X	X	X <sup>only AT</sup>		X
3	Head of <i>Village Investments Committee</i> <sup>2</sup>					X
4	Pasture users (majority of members)	X	X	X	X	X
5	Experienced pasture users			X	X	
6	Large-scale livestock owners			X	X	
7	Opinion leaders and honorable community members			X	X	
8	Participation of members of different wealth groups		X		X	
9	Participation of women and young people, vulnerable groups and non-livestock pasture users in Pasture Committee foundation process		X			
10	Livestock service providers			X	X	
11	Residents from all municipality villages			X	X	X
12	Users of all different grazing areas			X <sup>only B</sup>	X	
13	Minimum number of members		X			X
14	Uneven number of members	X				X
15	Dissolution in case of resource user exclusion during establishment		X			X <sup>only AT</sup>

Source: own representation

<sup>2</sup> For an outline of the role of the Village Investments Committee as part of the donor-driven *Village Investments Project* and the composition of that committee see Section 3.3.3

Column A: pasture law; Column B; ARIS implementation guidelines; Column C, D, E: municipality level interviews with ARIS Community Officers; AT: Municipality Ala Too, B: Municipality Bulak, KT: Municipality Kara Tash

In addition, they created easy to implement rules in order to cope with the absence of herders during Pasture Committee formation: ARIS Community Officers replaced absent herders with family members, often a male and senior relative (rule 7 and 5). They thereby enabled the progress of the Pasture Committee formation process according to agency requirements, but ignored the fact that the most active group of pasture users was not involved, because they were on the summer pastures.

## 5.6 Drivers of institutional design

The case study showed that the set of boundary working rules designed by ARIS Community Officers and the working rules designed by municipality administrators deviated only slightly across all studied municipalities. Hence, regardless of their room for discretion, representatives of the two groups of SLBs – ARIS Community Officers and municipality administrators – designed, independently of each other, the same *routines*. The designed rules lead to the conclusion that the main objective in rule design was to create rules which ensured achievement of what they perceived as their task. The case studies pointed at a very strong impact of the SLBs agency on the mental model of SLBs tasks. Under the given external constraints, agency rules and available resources (already discussed in Section 5.5) SLBs rationally design rules.

The relevancy of task perception was best shown by an observed misunderstanding between ARIS Community Officers and their agency that resulted from the agencies' lip-service to community participation. During staff trainings ARIS Community Officers were instructed to ensure full community mobilization. The denial of agency rule modification – in other words the modification of the implementation plan- in a way to support effective community participation, led ARIS Community Officers to modify their mental model of their task. As a result they considered their task as to ensuring quick Pasture Committee formation with some participatory elements, instead of full community participation. The boundary rules they designed entirely served that newly created task perception.

A second finding is, that, besides task perception SLBs pursued own objectives in order to make their work easier: ARIS Community Officers aimed to achieve client (in this case municipality staff) compliance by proposing easy to implement rules, such as adding formal office holders to the Pasture Committee – which required only incremental changes of local practice by municipality administrations instead of insisting on a dissolution of the Pasture Committee and a restart of the formation process.

Municipality administrations task perception was a result of implementation instructions by district agency who requested the establishment of Pasture Committees without participation requirements. They therefore endorsed the boundary rules proposed by ARIS Community Officers.

In addition, administrative staff pursued their own objectives: focusing on client (citizen) satisfaction and avoidance of local conflict. Hence, they employed a strategy for member selection – mainly appointment – which was neither particularly democratic nor participatory but which they considered an accepted and successful strategy which was reported by municipality level respondents to the usually ongoing practice for any type of citizen group formation in those municipalities. Besides they sought to improve citizen satisfaction by establishing participation rules which ensured not only the representation of influential community members but also aimed to establish a functional Pasture Committee by adding livestock sector experts.

Both these rule sets complemented each other as no conflict of interest by SLBs was observed. ARIS Community Officers did not seek to achieve any other objective than Pasture Committee formation and lacked any personal interest in its specific composition. Municipality administration – in contrast – aimed at functionality. Problems might have started to arise if ARIS Community Officers had more strongly insisted on minority involvement which might have led, in the eyes of municipality administrators, to less functional Pasture Committees. However, such conflict of interests did not emerge.

## 5.7 Discussion and conclusion

The introduction of a new pasture law in Kyrgyzstan has initiated the establishment of municipality level governance organizations, so called *Pasture Committees* (Pasture Committees). The case study explored which and how local level policy implementers designed rules for the establishment of such organizations (*boundary rules*). The study identified two consecutive implementation phases: in the first phase, municipality administrations were in charge of boundary rule design. In the second phase, staff of an implementing state run, but donor funded, agency, called *Community-development Support Officers* (henceforth: ARIS Community Officers), led the establishment process. A result of the implementation strategy is that both types of actors exhibit characteristics of *street-level bureaucrats* (SLBs) and, accordingly, designed rules based on their own discretion. Rule design was determined by task perception formed by interaction with their agency, the pursuit of their own (non-economic) objectives such client conflict avoidance. My findings reemphasise the relevance of implementers' understanding of their tasks for policy outcomes (Hill 2003).

Field work also showed that discretionary rule design by local SLBs has led to tailored rule design most appropriate to municipality needs. However, associated social benefits in term of equity were not and seem to depend entirely on

the policy implementers aims. It is important to note that such rule design is driven by local level mental models and preferences which might not coincide with external policy designers' preferences.

Institutional design cannot be reasoned by mono-causal explanation. Hence, it is difficult to identify one of the common grand theories of institutional change as a compelling explanation of rule design (for a summary of those theories see, Kingston and Caballero 2009; Milczarek 2002; Zikos and Thiel 2013). Even theoretical specifications for the post-socialist context (Allio et al. 1997) which see institutional change as a result of "realizations of opportunities for Pareto improvements" (economic theory), strategic government actions aiming to satisfy the electorate (public choice theory) and the benefits that materialized as "the by-product of distributional conflict" (distributional theory) (Allio et al. 1997: 320) do not comprehensively explain the observed processes.

It is particularly interesting to note that *distributive bargaining* (Knight 1992) which has frequently been found to be the most powerful explanatory approach to institutional change in the post-socialist context (i.e. Milczarek 2002; Theesfeld 2005) was not observed, even though competing rule sets were designed by the different SLBs. The study thereby supports one of Lipsky 1980; 1980) central claim: that SLBs institutional choice is, by definition, not determined by rent seeking. However, this finding might only hold for the specific implementation situations in which implementing actors lack information about and experience with the implemented policy which does not allow participants to anticipate direct economic benefits from specific rule sets or where such benefits are considered very small.

Transaction cost reduction occurs but is not the driver of institutional change. SLBs, in their desire to cut down their work load and ensure client compliance, creatively design rules that are easy to implement, control, enforce, and are therefore by definition transaction cost minimizers. However, the reduction of transaction cost is the indirect effect they achieve in their search for limitation of their own work load and task performance improvement.

The data finds boundary rule design to be a result of a pragmatic rational most appropriate but also consequential logic (March and Olsen 2006). SLBs rule design acknowledges task perception, based on their agencies objectives, their own capacity and local level working conditions and the expected consequences of their action and build, at least in the case of municipality administrators, on their experience with similar tasks.

The proposed changes to the Kiser and Ostrom Approach to institutional analysis (Kiser and Ostrom 2000) and the identification of the different transactions at the different analytical levels has been helpful for the identification of the implementation network involved in implementation rule design. The use of Lipsky's SLB model for implementation related decision making provided an enlightening way to link implementation research and institutional analysis. The combination allowed for a focused, context sensitive analysis of the interplay of

implementation context and rule making. However, its conceptual limitation to democratic administrative systems which sees SLBs, in general, as non-corrupt requires further adaptations in order to be of more use.

The most relevant practical implication of this study is its documentation of a need for involvement of SLBs (street-level bureaucrats) in planning of implementation strategies in order to avoid the use of blue print implementation strategies which do not produce the intended effect.



## **6 Street Level Bureaucrats at work. A municipality-level institutional analysis of community-based natural resource management implementation practice in the pasture sector of Kyrgyzstan<sup>1</sup>**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Decentralization and its embodiment in environmental governance - Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) – is often considered a remedy or even a panacea to environmental, governance and social challenges (Dressler et al. 2010; McCarthy 2004). Mainly seen as a key to better governance at sub-national levels (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2006c; Lemos and Agrawal 2006; Agrawal and Ostrom 2007), CBNRM has become a prominent policy reform approach in a number of countries, particularly in those states and, often rural, areas where the public administrative system is considered to under-perform. Hence, in many countries supported by the donor community – which has endorsed CBNRM as a key reform concept (Pincus 2001; Stoll-Kleemann et al. 2010) – CBNRM programs and CBNRM-related formal laws and regulations are being implemented. This has specific implications: unlike exemplary cases of endogenously created sustainable self-governance of natural resources (Ostrom 1990; Wade 1988) – from which common-pool resource theory and the CBNRM paradigm have evolved – CBNRM today is externally designed and introduced.

The external introduction of CBNRM, for example, by donor organizations directly, or by governmental or government-mandated implementing agencies, is problematic and the results are mixed. Besides success (Leisher et al. 2012; Banks et al. 2003; Saito-Jensen et al. 2010; Sheppard et al. 2010), research has documented many cases of failure – either in terms of conservation impact (Dumas et al. 2010; Jiang 2006) or social equity outcomes (Shrestha and McManus 2007; Cleaver 2005; Cornwall 2003; Blaikie 2006; Wever et al. 2012).

CBNRM depends on resource user involvement:

“CBNRM ... requires some degree of devolution of decision-making power and authority over natural resources to communities and community-based organizations... [CBNRM] seeks to encourage better resource management outcomes with the full participation of communities and pasture users in decision-making activities, and the in-

---

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a slightly revised version of the article Crewett (2015c) which was published in *Sustainability* 7(3), 3146-3174.

corporation of local institutions, customary practices, and knowledge systems in management, regulatory, and enforcement processes” [Armitage 2005, quoted in Gruber 2010: 53).

However, several studies have found that effective resource user involvement, considered by many an important prerequisite for sustainable and equitable self-governance (Gruber 2010; Dinar et al. 2007; Dietz et al. 2003; Agrawal 2001; Rodriguez-Izquierdo et al. 2010; Parker and Thapa 2011), is difficult to achieve (Lo Cascio and Beilin 2010). The characteristics of CBNRM implementation strategies and the resulting interaction among policy implementers and resource users play a decisive role for CBNRM implementation outcomes (Sunam and McCarthy 2010; Mansuri and Rao 2004; Nkhata and Breen 2010; Nikitina et al. 2010; Zulu 2009; Young 2006). This interaction is particularly difficult in societies with a long history of top-down government (Atmiş et al. 2007) where CBNRM is being introduced.

The general objective of this chapter is to explore how a CBNRM implementation strategy and the resulting interaction among lowest-level policy implementers and resource users influence resource user participation in CBNRM by means of information rule design. The research was motivated by a general aim to contribute to filling a knowledge gap on the distributional impact of municipality-level CBNRM implementation, for which I assume information access a precondition. I assume that access to information is determined by information rules – that is, prescriptions which

“... authorize channels of information flow among participants, assign the obligation, permission, or prohibition to communicate [specific knowledge] to participants ..., and [define] the language and form in which communication will take place” (Ostrom 2005: 206).

I further assume that information rules are being created in the process of policy implementation. In order to contribute to the general objective of this study I specifically study an example of CBNRM implementation in Kyrgyzstan – the introduction of a community-based pasture management reform – and investigate the following research questions:

- Which specific information rules do local-level policy implementers (whom I define as street-level bureaucrats (SLB) design during the implementation of the Kyrgyz community-based pasture management reform?
- How do these information rules influence resource user involvement opportunities in community-based pasture management in Kyrgyzstan?
- How do the implementation strategy describing street-level bureaucrats’ information tasks and the governance structure within which street-level bureaucrats’ operate influence their information rule design?

In the following Section 6.2 I introduce the analytical framework which proposes that resource user involvement in CBNRM depends to a large degree on the characteristics of routines – in other words working rules – which policy implementers create to simplify the information transfer transaction. In Section 6.3, I describe the case study in Kyrgyzstan, where community-based pasture management was introduced by the law “*On Pastures*” (Pasture Law) which was issued in 2009. In Section 6.4, I explore how different types of policy implementers informed resource users and how the course of action they chose impacted pasture users’ awareness of CBNRM (and of the implicit participation opportunities). In Section 6.4.1, I first summarize the policy implementation tasks allocated to policy implementers and outline the formally prescribed rules for resource user information. Section 6.4.2 reviews the working conditions and governance structures under which the two groups of policy implementers perform these information tasks: municipality administrators and staff of an implementing organization (ARIS) called Community Development Support Officers. Section 6.4.3 reports on pasture users’ information about participation opportunities under CBNRM management. In Section 6.4.4, I explore the information routines created by policy implementers. Section 6.4.5 discusses the reasons for the emergence of these routines. In Section 6.5, I present theoretical and practical implications of the study.

## 6.2 Analytical framework

In this section, I develop a modified version of the Institutions of Sustainability framework (Hagedorn 2008; Hagedorn et al. 2002) (IoS framework) which acknowledges case-study-relevant contributions from public administration research in order to more specifically acknowledge characteristics of actors and governance structures – characteristics particular to implementation situations – which have not been specified in other frameworks. The IoS framework (Hagedorn 2008; Hagedorn et al. 2002) takes the following four determinants of institutional change into account: a) properties of transactions, b) characteristics of existing institutions, c) characteristics of actors, and d) governance structures. Due to space limitations, the following outline of the IoS framework is not exhaustive. I only focus on the most crucial elements. For a detailed description of the framework’s approach, see the works of Hagedorn and colleagues (Hagedorn 2008; Hagedorn et al. 2002).

*Transactions* have been identified as the “unit of activity” (Commons 1931; (p. 651) and are often considered the starting point of institutional analysis (Hagedorn 2008). In this chapter I explore a policy implementation transaction during which “a policy is put into action and practice” (Parsons 1995: 461). Policy implementation transactions consist of a number of sub-transactions. The chapter looks at one specific sub-transaction: the process of transferring CBNRM-related information to users of natural resources, in adherence to the

principle of resource user involvement in CBNRM. This transaction I call *information transfer transaction*.

*Institutions* are “systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social interaction” (Hodgson 2006). They can be formal – in other words mainly *written* – rules, i.e., codified laws, or – often *unwritten* – working rules (Commons 1957; Sproule-Jones 1993). Working rules – sometimes also called rules-in-use – are those rules that are “actually used, monitored, and enforced when individuals make choices about the actions they will take” (Ostrom 2005: 51). Institutions are nested within other rules (Kiser and Ostrom 1982). Hence, besides exploring the institutional outcome of the policy implementation transaction – the information working rules – institutional analysis also requires taking into account the institutional setting – the rules which structure the policy implementation transaction itself. These are formal rules found in the law and in written implementation instructions as well as relevant informal rules of conduct.

In the proposed study framework the *actor* component has a prominent role. I take a bottom-up perspective on policy implementation (for an overview see, e.g., Hill and Hupe 2009: 51ff.), according to which the actions of service providers who operate at the lowest administrative levels – commonly referred to as Street Level Bureaucrats (SLBs) (Hupe and Hill 2007; Hill 2003; Romzek 2000; Lipsky 1980) – are considered the most important determinants of a policy’s local effect. Implementation studies have shown the relevance of policy implementer networks (Brinkerhoff 1996) in which different types of SLBs play a role. Note that SLBs do not necessarily live close to their clients – they are those members of policy implementing organizations who have regular and close interaction with those to whom they are to provide services. It is therefore useful to further distinguish between external and local SLBs both of which operate in different governance structures. Local SLBs are bureaucrats operating at the lowest level of state administration. Their offices are permanently located in the municipality where they serve. External SLBs – in contrast – are representatives of non-local administrations, donor organizations or NGOs.

*Governance structures* within which transactions occur and actors operate are organizational constructs which establish order, mitigate conflict and ensure mutual gains (Commons 1932: 4). They have three stylized forms: a) market, b) hierarchy, or c) type of hybrid institutional arrangement, where private and public elements intertwine. These governance structures differ by cost and competence and impose different incentives and controls on actors, which lead to different degrees of autonomy and cooperation (Williamson 1999: 271f.). SLBs are, by definition, employed in hierarchical organizations. In hierarchies actors’ actions are highly controlled and coordinated. Hierarchies therefore generate few incentives and constrain autonomy (Williamson 1999). The governance structure of street-level bureaucracy is not a pure version of hierarchy. The specific working conditions of the SLB increase individual autonomy and limit

administrative control. By influencing SLBs' perception of rewards and costs of their activities, the governance structure impacts the discretionary competence of SLBs:

- SLBs' actions are constrained by their working conditions which, to a large extent, depend on their subordination to an implementing organization – which can be not only a government office but also a civil society organization (Hupe and Hill 2007),
- SLBs work in relative spatial distance from the employing organization but in relative spatial proximity to the citizens they serve,
- they are confronted with ambiguous role expectations from their employing organization and from local clients with whom they interact daily,
- they have to deal with resource constraints but are confronted with service demands from their clients that exceed available capacity,
- SLBs deal with laws and rules external or internal to their employing organization which often fail to cover the diversity of cases they have to handle, because SLBs often need to judge case by case and therefore have some degree of discretion (Romzek 2000; Lipsky 1980).

SLBs therefore experience a paradox situation as they “see themselves as [...] oppressed by the bureaucracy within which they work. Yet they often seem to have a great deal of discretionary freedom and autonomy” (Hill and Hupe 2009: 52).

SLBs actively design those working rules for policy implementation which are decisive for implementation outcomes. Hence, all SLBs can be equated with policy implementers. SLBs use their discretionary freedom to create routines and simplifications. “Routines are the regularized or habitual patterns by which tasks are performed. Simplifications are symbolic constructs in terms of which decisions about potentially complex phenomena are made, utilizing a smaller set of clues than those presented by the phenomena. Routines are behavioural patterns of response, simplifications are mental patterns of ordering data with which routines may or may not be associated” (Lipsky 1980: 225).

SLBs develop routines and simplifications by assessing rewards and penalties and the available resources. Moreover, routines and simplifications let SLBs “organize their work to derive a solution within the resource constraints they encounter” (Lipsky 1980: 83). Therefore, the characteristics of the policy implementation working rules SLBs develop depend on their relationship to their organization.

Frequently, the resulting working rules deviate from formal rules and can even be “entirely informal and contrary to agency policy” (Lipsky 1980: 86), because the SLBs choose either a specific way of executing an existing rule, or select one specific rule among a set of rules (Hupe and Hill 2007). SLBs' sim-

plification strategies might differ, as the selection of simplifications and routines depends on individual perceptions of adequate professional behavior, own perceptions of tasks, etc., but also on individual differences in the evaluation of options to overcome resource constraints (Wilson 1989). Administrators – also SLBs – “satisfice rather than maximize” (Simon 1997: 119). The decisions they take are impacted by a specific perception of the implementation task. This perception is determined by: a) personal beliefs, including predispositions about how the job is to be done, b) previous experiences, c) sensitivity to professional standards, d) political ideology, and e) personal characteristics (Wilson 1989).

It is nevertheless assumed that the routines and simplifications SLBs employ share some characteristics: a) they tend to limit access to and demand for SLBs’ services, b) they maximize utilization of available resources, and c) they aim to obtain client compliance over and above the procedures developed by their employing organization (Lipsky 1980).

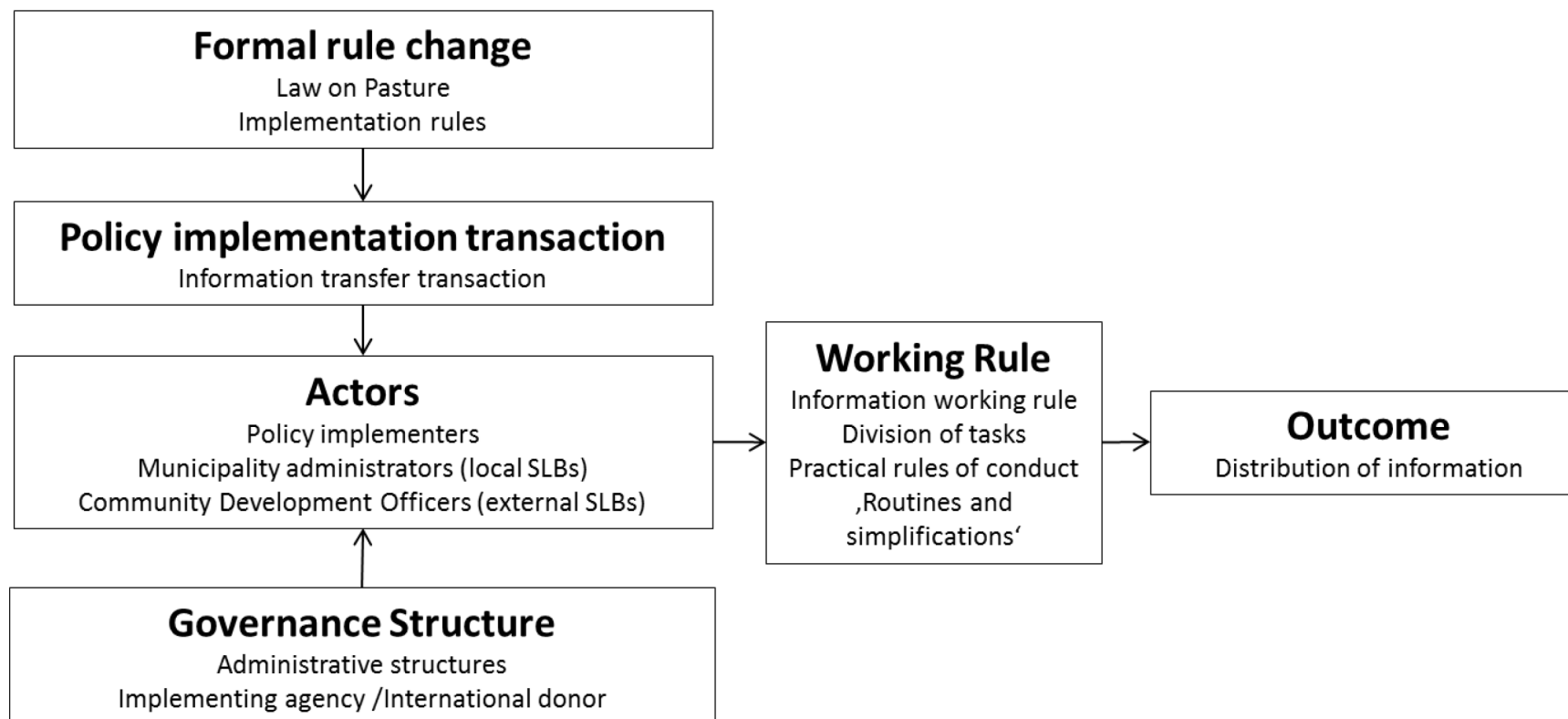
Hence, the case studies’ analytical framework (see Figure 6-1), which is based on the actors and governance structure component of the IoS, proposes the following relationships: first, the studied transaction is part of the implementation of a new policy; second, the actors are SLBs who carry out the policy implementation transaction, i.e., they execute a formal information rule; third, SLBs are assumed to be bound to hierarchical governance structures and the associated rules for task performance; fourth, during local-level implementation, the SLBs design working rules which allocate CBNRM resource user opportunities to resource users.

I assume that information working rules are routines which are consciously designed by SLBs depending on three factors: first, the characteristics of the policy implementation transaction; second, the SLBs’ perception of the implementation task; third, the governance structure, including its relevant institutions or rules of conduct. To select a specific course of action, SLBs coordinate their task perception with the given rules of conduct and the associated rewards and responsibilities imposed by their agency. In addition, they acknowledge that their actions are embedded in accountability relationships, such as the rules enforced by their governance structure.

### **6.3 Material and methods**

The Kyrgyz Republic (henceforth Kyrgyzstan) is a Central Asian country which belonged to the Soviet Union until 1991. The country is highly mountainous and vast areas are dominated by pasture lands and agro-pastoral land use: 97 percent of the area is located 1000 meters above sea level and of the roughly 10.5 million hectares of agricultural land 9.2 million hectares are classified as naturally grown permanent meadows and pastures (FAO 2015: n.p). The changes in the distribution of property rights that were associated with the break-up of the Soviet Union also impacted pasture management in the country. Currently, the

second pasture management reform – which embodies CBNRM principles and replaced a lease-based approach (Crewett 2015b, Dörre 2012) – is in place.

**Figure 6-1: Analytical framework**

Source: own representation



In 1996, so-called Local Self-governments were established at municipality level. Those bodies consist of an administrative apparatus (henceforth *municipality administration*) and a municipality council. Until 2008, both the head of the Local Self-government and the council members were elected by popular vote. The Local Self-governments are formally independent of the Kyrgyz central state and its offices at regional and district levels. In practice, however, Local Self-governments at municipality level report to and execute orders from the district-level state administrations (Mukanova 2008; Baimyrzaeva 2005; Liebert and Tiulegenov 2013).

On January 26, 2009 a new law titled “*On Pastures*” (Pasture Law) was issued by the Pasture Department of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry (MAWRPI). The Pasture Law replaced a pasture leasing system that had been in place since 2002 (Crewett 2012; Dörre 2012) and which had come under severe criticism for its inability to cope with growing pasture land degradation (Crewett 2012). It devolved pasture management rights from regional and district level branches of the central government to Local Self-governments and community-based organizations, called Pasture User Unions (PUUs) and their executive bodies called Pasture Committees. By law, all municipality residents are to become members of the PUU. Devolution granted collective rangeland management rights to the PUUs and entitled them to distribute seasonal pasture use rights to individual herders, to fix annual grazing fees based on animal numbers, endowed them with dispute resolution authority, and the right to use revenue from fee collection for management and investment in pasture infrastructure.

I used empirical data from a case study (Yin 1993) at three sites in rural Kyrgyzstan. The study sites were chosen according to a maximum variation sampling logic (Teddlie and Yu 2007) based on initial assumptions about different degrees of resource user involvement in CBNRM implementation.

**Table 6-1: Timing of events and study activities**

	Pasture Law Implementation Activities	Data Collection Activities
May – Jul 2008		Data collection in municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, (different research focus); Background interviews with pasture law designers and pilot project implementers in municipality Ala Too
Nov 2008	Pasture Committee foundation in Kara Tash	

Jan 2009	Law “ <i>On Pastures</i> ” signed	
Jul 2009	District-level bodies of Local State Administration ordered Pasture Committee establishment at municipality level <sup>1</sup> ; Pasture Committee foundation in Ala Too; Pasture Committee foundation in Bulak	Data collection at national level; Data collection in municipalities Ala Too and Bulak
Aug 2009	ARIS Community Development Support Officers <sup>2</sup> received training	Data collection at national (cont.) district and municipality level;
Sep 2009	ARIS Community Development Support Officers start implementation activities	Data collection in municipalities Ala Too and Bulak (cont.); Data collection in municipality Kara Tash
Oct 2009	ARIS (internal) registration deadline for Pasture Committees	

Source: own representation

Data for this study was compiled in different phases (see Table 6-1). In a first phase, in July 2009 expert interviews on the community-based pasture management reform – initiated by the introduction of the Pasture Law were held. In addition, existing implementation experience was discussed in the Ala Too and Bulak municipalities, which the researcher knew from previous data collection activities in Kyrgyzstan. These interviews revealed that in both municipalities some activities for pasture committee establishment were already ongoing. It was noted that these processes differed in their approach and that the lack of implementation instructions for the Pasture Law had left great room for discretion at municipality level. In the second phase, after the research questions had

<sup>1</sup> Presumably after the draft of presidential decree on implementation specifications for law “On Pastures” (Draft for Decree N 386; June 16, 2009) became public.

<sup>2</sup> ARIS Community Development Support Officers are the municipality-level staff of the quasi-governmental but mainly donor financed organization ARIS which is in charge of the implementation of a number of development programmes throughout Kyrgyzstan. The implementation of the CBNRM pasture management reform embodied in the Law On Pastures is one of its key activities.

been specified further, the Kara Tash municipality was added to the set of case study municipalities. This municipality was selected because – unlike the other two municipalities – NGO staff had reported that pasture committees had been established here in a more participatory process. This NGO had been experimenting with community-based pasture governance before the Pasture Law was issued. In August, September and October 2009, in-depth village level-data was collected.<sup>3</sup> At that time, the implementing organization had arrived in the municipalities and started to complement the activities of the municipality administrators (further details of this two-phase implementation process, see 5.4) and the Pasture Committee establishment process was still ongoing at all study sites.

**Table 6-2: Case study selection criteria**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Researchers' perception of Pasture Committee formation process</b>
Ala Too	Pasture Committee was established by municipality administration; No community involvement
Bulak	Pasture Committee was established by municipality administration; Selected, wealthy livestock owners involved only
Kara Tash	Pasture Committee informally established by a group of local activists aided by NGO as part of NGO's upscaling of activities

Source: own representation

Working rules with different degrees of deviation from the formal rules for Pasture Committee establishment were expected at each site (see Table 6-2 for an overview on observations). However, as will be shown below, in-depth case study work revealed that this diversity of working rules did not actually exist. (What was first misunderstood as the ordered dissolution of one of the Pasture Committees due to its non-participatory establishment process was actually only a dissolution on paper; the committee was later revived in exactly the same composition, with only a few additional new members, who were official office holders.) Contrary to the initial assumption, all three Pasture Committee for-

<sup>3</sup> Those background interviews are not listed in Table 6-3 because the generated information were only used for the identification of the case study sites and were not incorporated into the body of information analysed with respect to the research question.

mation processes followed basically the same general procedure with only cosmetic variations. In none of the cases was there any drastic variation in the approaches policy implementers used.

As this chapter is subject to a confidentiality agreement with all respondents, the names of the municipalities have partly been changed and their locations are not pinpointed. All municipalities lie in key livestock production areas in Northern Kyrgyzstan, where agro-pastoralism is the dominant source of income. All resident families except for the poorest own livestock and use pastures for grazing, either directly, as herders, or indirectly, as users of herding services. In the studied municipalities, agro-pastoralism is the common practice. Herders spend the period from May to October on pastures outside of the village, some travel to summer pastures at altitudes above 2500 m (a detailed description of the migration pattern is found in Steimann 2011 and Schoch and Steimann 2010).

Data collection started with the mapping of the policy implementation network based on a set of expert-interviews and document analysis. An overview on the pasture law implementation actor constellation is found in Figure 6-2. At municipality level two types of SLBs – *local* and *external SLBs* are involved in policy implementation. In the study case *local SLBs* are municipality administrators; *external SLBs* – in contrast – are field staff called *Community Development Support Officers* (henceforth: ARIS Community Officers) of the law-implementing organization Kyrgyz Republic's Community Development and Investment Agency (ARIS). Both actor groups are the lowest-level staff members in hierarchical organizations. Municipality administrations depend on orders of higher authorities within the Kyrgyz administrative system – mainly from district administrations, where local branches of the central state administration are located. The staff of the implementing organization ARIS is clearly bound to its employer, which is financially almost entirely dependent on international donor organizations – mainly the World Bank. Both these organizations became involved in policy implementation and the information transfer transaction at different points in time.

Municipality administrators started implementing the Pasture Law at municipality level by July 2009. The staff of ARIS supported this process with additional activities from September 2009 on. This time lag can be explained by a delay in the provision of implementation instructions to municipality administrators by central government bodies in charge of law design (for details see Crewett 2015b). The exact reason why policy implementation by municipality administrators in Ala Too and Bulak started in July 2009 could not fully be verified. In summer 2009, members of regional and district branches of the central government informally ordered the start of pasture committee formation. None of the respondents at municipality level but also no expert at district and national levels could remember the exact date and the way this was announced. However, as a result of what the head of municipality Ala Too named “orders from the government – but at that time we got different orders,” Ala Too and Bulak, both

had created a Pasture Committee which existed in July 2009 – before the ARIS implementation process started. Hence, in all three study municipalities (for the explanation for Pasture Committee establishment in Kara Tash see above) Pasture Committees existed before the ARIS implementation activities started.

**Table 6-3: Number of policy implementation expert interviews**

Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry (MAWRPI) staff	1
Community Development and Investment Agency (ARIS) staff (Leadership and ARIS Community Officers)	4
Municipality administration staff	5
Pasture Committee members	8

Source: own representation

I conducted 18 expert interviews (Bogner and Menz 2009) with “policy implementers,” whom I define as individuals who possess, due to their function or their role in the policy implementation process, specific process knowledge about the information transfer transaction. I also interviewed implementation strategy designers including representatives of: a) the Ministry of Agriculture, b) the policy implementing organization ARIS, c) the municipality administration, d) resource users who were given positions in the newly established Pasture Committees (Table 6-3). In addition, I held background interviews with employees of a Kyrgyz NGO who consulted the government on pasture law design and implementation. In order to explore the outcomes of the information transfer transaction, I held 47 interviews with purposefully selected pasture users, all of whom owned livestock but did not hold any formal office, such as a position within the administration or the Pasture Committee (see Table 6-4).

**Table 6-4: Number of pasture user interviews**

Pasture users	Kara Tash	12
	Bulak	19
	Ala Too	16

Source: own representation

Data collection methods were adjusted according to the interview situation. At national level, semi-structured expert interviews were held. However, respondents at the municipality level considered the research topic very sensitive, so the data collection methods had to be adapted (Lee 1999; Lee and Renzetti 1990). Hence, semi-structured interviews were replaced by narrative interviews (von Klobuczynski 1999; Schütze 1983; Küsters 2009) in order to minimize the

“question threat” (Foddy 1993: pp. 112). All interviews were conducted by the author and consecutively translated into either Kyrgyz or Russian.

Interview transcripts were analyzed by means of qualitative content analysis with inductive and deductive coding (Mayring 2004), combined with stepwise constant comparison (Glaser 1965; Boeije 2002). Deductive coding themes were generated from the framework’s study variables. In addition, the Pasture Law and the ARIS Implementation Plan were reviewed for information related to policy implementation and information transfer prescriptions.

## 6.4 Results

### 6.4.1 *Formal rules for implementing a pasture management reform*

The following sections focus on how different types of SLBs carried out their task of resource user information and how their actions impacted pasture users’ awareness of CBNRM participation opportunities.

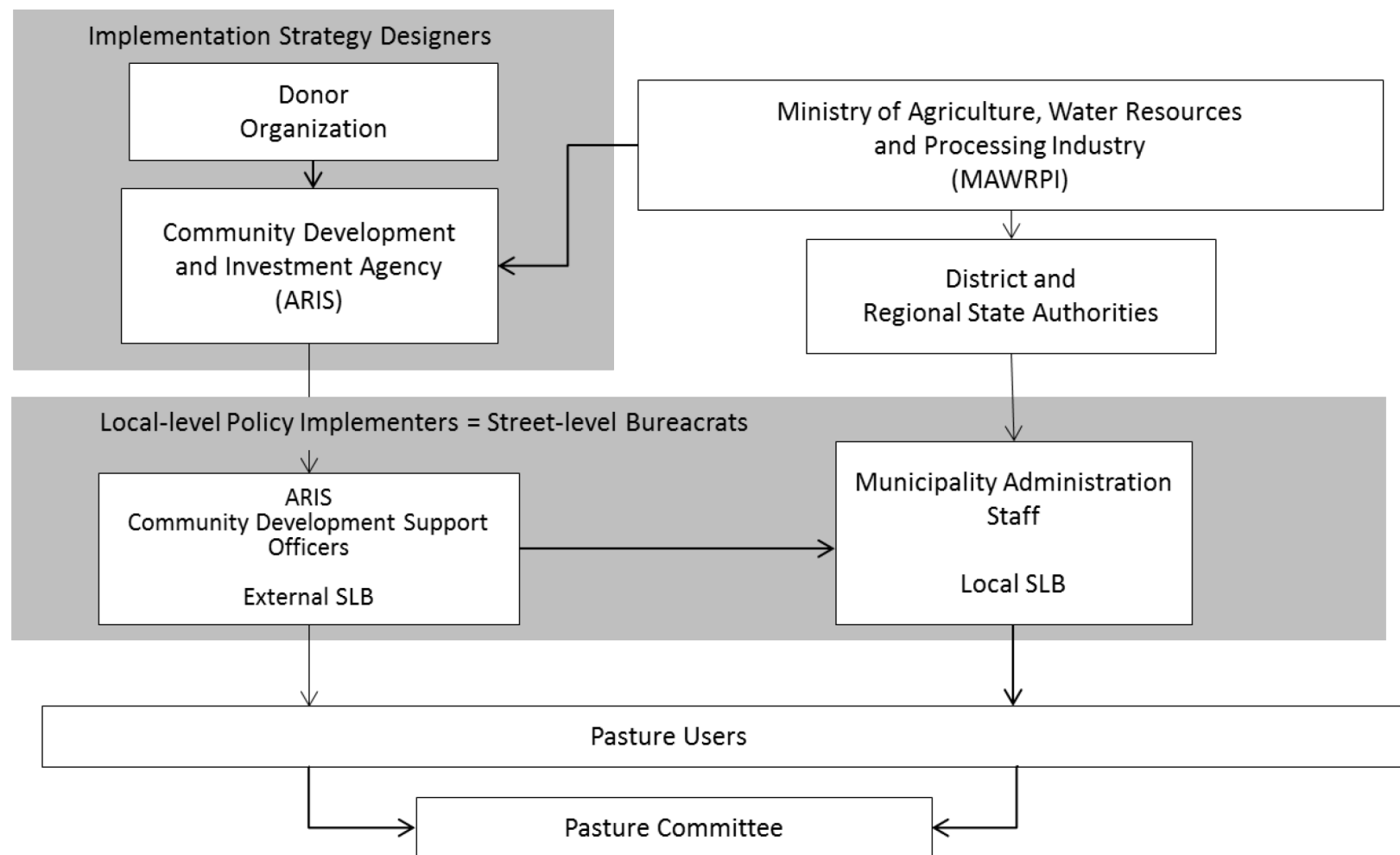
The implementation of the Pasture Law is part of a donor-financed Agricultural Investment and Services Project which started in 2008. As one component of this project, the MWRAPI had transferred actual implementation activities to the donor-supported Community Development and Investment Agency (ARIS). ARIS employees – so-called Community Development Support Officers (henceforth ARIS Community Officers) – were authorized to implement laws at municipality level starting from August 2009.

The first phase of implementation was rather un-coordinated: in spring 2009, municipality administrators started forming Pasture Committees without specifications from higher administrative bodies. Only in a secondary phase, from August 2009 on, did ARIS start their implementation operations at municipality level, for which they designed a detailed implementation plan (ARIS Implementation Plan) with specifications on information dissemination.

The ARIS Implementation Plan prescribed a series of municipality-level information transfer activities as prerequisites for the establishment of Pasture Committees. The aim was participatory citizen mobilization and involvement of heterogeneous municipality-level actors, including marginalized and minority groups. The ARIS Implementation Plan lists 41 detailed tasks for CBNRM implementation, the responsible bodies, the pasture users to address, the expected results of each task, and the relevant instruments. The full procedure is beyond the scope of this chapter. Therefore, only the prescribed municipality-level activities are summarized in Table 6-5 and discussed in the following sections.

At municipality level, the information campaign comprised the following: (a) *roundtables* in each district and municipality administration, (b) *municipality-level information campaigns* including household-level information activities, (c) *introductory meetings* at the village level, and (d) *first village meetings* at the village level. The ARIS Implementation Plan specifically suggests that all meetings and activities involve representatives of all social groups. Particularly for

the introductory and first village meeting, participation of representatives of the entire community was mandatory. During the information campaign, ARIS Community Officers were responsible for explaining the objectives and strategies of CBNRM implementation in greater detail, both verbally during introductory and village meetings, but also by providing written information material. The ARIS Implementation Plan specifically advises ARIS Community Officers to use blackboard announcements and other dissemination activities from household up to village level, including distribution of written information on the pasture governance reform. The ARIS Implementation Plan required ARIS Community Officers to cooperate with the municipality administration and “self-motivated” local activists in distributing information to the broader community and to pasture users.

**Figure 6-2: Pasture law implementation actor constellation in Kyrgyzstan in 2009**

Source: own representation



**Table 6-5: Community-level information dissemination tasks extracted from implementation guideline document**

Activity	Key objectives (selection)	Resource user involvement	Citizen information strategies
Roundtable talks at municipality level	Explanation of pasture legislation, PUU and Pasture Committee objectives, structures and registration procedures, discussion of implementation procedure at community level, cooperation agreement between municipality administration and implementing agency on social mobilization and implementation.	Invitation of leading staff of the municipality administration, representatives of the village council, specific village interest groups (including women's groups, youth groups, etc.).	Preliminary meetings with chairpersons of key organizations, written invitation of all participants.
Information campaign	Dissemination of printed and verbal information on pasture management and improvement project.	Farmers (large-scale, small-scale), herders, indirect pasture users, women, elderly council members, youth, low-income households, local community, public and private organizations in households, streets, organizations and villages.	Design of detailed dissemination strategy for households, streets, and villages. Involvement of existing community groups from previous [ARIS] projects.
Introductory meetings in each village	Explanation of new legislation on pasture management, PUU and Pasture Committee objectives, structures and registration procedures, discussion of implementation procedure at community level, selection of village mobilizers, establishing four pas-	Farmers (large-scale, small-scale), herders, indirect pasture users, women, elderly council members, youth, low-income households, local community, public and	Information on dates, times and venues of the introductory meetings is made available to the general public and local organizations during the information campaign. An-

	ture user groups [(1) large-scale farmers; (2) small-scale farmers; (3) herders; (4) indirect pasture users], definition of minimum number of participants of village meetings.	private organizations.	nouncements to be posted in public spots.
First village meeting	Additional information on PUU and Pasture Committee, discussion of PUU charter, approval of pasture user group membership, election of PUU conference delegates, appointment of Pasture Committee members for village.	Farmers (large-scale, small-scale), herders, indirect pasture users, women, elderly council members, youth, low-income households, local community, public and private organizations.	Verbal and printed information on the goals and objectives, procedures for the formation of „Pasture User Groups“ is disseminated among all the parties concerned. Flyers describing the goals and objectives of and procedures for their formation to be posted in public places. Work will be also executed through self-motivated people who are well aware of and willing to participate in the „Pasture User Groups“.
Municipality council session	Discussion of PUU charter, appointment of 5 municipality council members for Pasture Committee.	Municipality council members	
PUU foundation conference	Formation of PUU, discussion and approval of Pasture Committee composition, for-	Delegates and invited parties	Information of delegates on details of conference

---

mation of Auditing Committee

---

Source: excerpt from ARIS Action matrix

### 6.4.2 Governance structures and Street-level Bureaucrats at work

The following section describes the implementation situation at municipality level. It reviews the working conditions and governance structures under which two identified groups of policy implementers operate: ARIS Community Development Officers and municipality administrators. These groups were professionally involved in implementing the Pasture Law in the first year after its publication.

#### 6.4.2.1 Municipality Administrators

After the Pasture Law was passed, municipality administrators became responsible for its implementation and for the formation of Pasture Committees. After August 2009, their status changed and they effectively became co-implementers of ARIS Community Officers and were endowed with an implementation plan that had been drafted by ARIS. This study mainly refers to heads of municipality administrations (municipality administrators) as *local SLBs*.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, municipality administrators operated in a strict hierarchical system lacking transparency and openness (Karashev and Tarbinski 2002). Therefore, at municipality level, the head of the municipality holds a very prominent role within the administration; other municipality administrators – e.g., so-called agricultural specialists – do not play any relevant role and do not hold independent decision making authority, because the head of the municipality usually monitors them very closely. At the same time, the head of the municipality, who is herself or himself under orders of higher authorities, such as the district administration, regional administration, or employees of the line ministry, holds only very limited practical authority for independent decision making (Engval 2007; Alymkulov and Kulatov 2002; Mukanova 2008; Liebert and Tiulegenov 2013; Martini 2013). Nevertheless, my interviews show that in specific situations, as in the study case, there is room for discretionary decision making.

Municipality administrators had to cope with unspecific implementation instructions and external pressure. All interviewed municipality administrators critically pointed to very unspecific orders from higher administrative bodies on implementing the Pasture Law. While all had received access to copies of the Pasture Law in spring 2009 and had been instructed by Pasture Committees, no implementation instructions had been provided. Hence, all municipality administrators expressed a lack of information and a need for support and guidance on the implementation of the Pasture Law. In one municipality, the interviewed administrator even asked me for my own knowledge about ongoing implementation in other municipalities. He said he expected insights into the proper implementation of the Pasture Law.

Despite the initial pressure for implementation, interviews revealed that municipality administrators' actual implementation of the Pasture Law was not monitored by higher administrative staff. This caused large room for discretionary decision making and also insecurity and uncertainty. Hence, information gaps and strong discretionary power led municipality administrations – in the manner of SLBs – to use their own version of appropriate procedure for resource user information and Pasture Committee establishment, which will be explored in Section 6.4.4.1.

Throughout the first year of the implementation process, municipality administrators did not gain a full understanding of the concept of CBNRM as a form of participatory resource user self-governance. Although, from August 2009, ARIS Community Officers introduced the ARIS Implementation Plan to municipality administrators to fill information gaps on the expected process of Pasture Law implementation, CBNRM-related training was not provided. Therefore, municipality administrators' information on the concepts of CBNRM remained very vague. The importance of resource user mobilization and participatory aspects of CBNRM in general did not reach municipality administrations. As will be shown later, this impacted how municipality administrators performed the information transaction.

#### 6.4.2.2 The implementing agencies' *Community Development Support Officers*

ARIS Community Development Support Officers (henceforth ARIS Community Officers) are *external SLBs* who became the responsible municipality-level policy implementers for local information activities from August 2009 on. They were instructed to carry out time-consuming information transfer activities prescribed by the ARIS Implementation Plan and also had a very tight timeframe to execute their task. On the other hand, there was some room for discretion due to low enforcement and lack of regulations for some of the challenges which emerged from cooperation with municipality administrators.

As employees of ARIS, ARIS Community Officers were introduced to the detailed ARIS Implementation Plan (Table 6-5) during a one-week training workshop. As a result of this training, ARIS Community Officers considered municipality participation during the entire CBNRM establishment process critical for success and therefore a desirable objective for municipality-level activities. All interviewed ARIS Community Officers shared a common task perception: they claimed as their objective to ensure an understanding of CBNRM objectives among all municipality residents and to ensure the involvement of all pasture users in CBNRM. However, as will be shown below, this ideal task perception deviated from their actual task performance.

ARIS Community Officers worked under considerable time pressure, which motivated them to use their right to rely on support from municipality administrators for the information transfer transaction. Their time plan gave them only

about 8 weeks to establish a Pasture Committee. Hence, they were effectively unable to perform the information tasks prescribed in the ARIS Implementation Plan, which included: a) street-level and household-level information dissemination, b) delivery of written invitations to participants in the roundtable meetings at municipality level, and c) inclusion of defined minority groups in all implementation activities. Consequently, they transferred these activities to the municipality administrators.

ARIS Community Officers had to cope with incomplete and inadequate implementation rules. The ARIS Implementation Plan did not provide rules for management of cases which deviated from the expected situation, but such cases were found in all studied municipalities. One example: upon their arrival, ARIS Community Officers found Pasture Committees that had earlier been established by municipality administrations and violated the sequence of required action and citizen participation prescribed by the ARIS Implementation Plan. ARIS Community Officers were therefore informally instructed by their employing organization ARIS to dissolve such non-participatory Pasture Committees and to restart Pasture Law implementation according to the ARIS Implementation Plan. However, ARIS did not provide formal process requirements on dissolving existing Pasture Committees and tools for participation evaluation. This left considerable room for discretion. Another observed effect of incomplete rules by ARIS was that ARIS Community Officers lost control of information transfer activities they had delegated to municipality administrators. ARIS Community Officers neither possessed the means to evaluate the information activities they shifted to municipality administrators, nor did they hold any formal rights to enforce specific tasks, because they were not members of the higher administration – to which municipality administrators effectively report. Hence, the municipality administrations possessed wide discretion regarding the degree of citizen involvement and followed their own perceptions of adequate citizen involvement and information procedures (see Section 6.4.2.1).

Also, the prescribed time plan was inadequate with respect to pasture users' needs and implementers' capacities. A static and overloaded process schedule put ARIS Community Officers under substantial time pressure. In their opinion, the prescribed procedure did not acknowledge local time preferences and was not adjusted to the pasture users' capacities and needs.

First, the information campaign and Pasture Committee formation was to take place during the yearly migration season, when an important group of pasture users, the migrating herder families, were absent from the villages.

Interviewer: “ Do you have a specific plan by when you expect to have pasture committees registered?”

Respondent: “By October 10, we were told.”

Interviewer: “Do you think that is realistic?”

- Respondent: “No, because we were on the training course in Bishkek in August, where we discussed the first component of the project, and there we were given this date. But we also suggested starting it only after November 10.”
- Interviewer: “To start?”
- Respondent: “To start, yes, because you know that all herdsmen are in the mountains right now and we have few people here in the village.”

Second, the ARIS Implementation Plan required a number of meetings which was assumed to overstretch the capacity of the usually small group of municipality residents who tend to be involved in self-governance activities. Given that municipality administrations had formed Pasture Committees already, ARIS Community Officers considered the obvious replication of implementation activities to contradict the objective of broad resource user mobilization. ARIS Community Officers feared that duplicate meetings would demobilize potentially interested municipality members, because those who engage in municipality-level self-governance activities are usually asked by the municipality administration and other community members to participate in many of the existing self-governance committees, such as the community development committee, irrigation water committee, drinking water committee, and the like.

“We already told [ARIS] that there is no need for the information meeting, because we have a lot of meetings. We have subcomponents for which we have to hold different meetings and usually the same people come to the meetings, and they are already fed up with the meetings. That's why we suggested not to hold this information meeting but to have only one meeting – the first one – where we can give general information. [...] Our management also supported our suggestion not to hold so many meetings. We thought that we could just combine the information meeting with the pasture user groups and the first meeting. All this could be one procedure” (Community Development Officer).

The following quote illustrates an additional challenge from the ARIS Implementation Plan. The Plan held inadequate assumptions about resource users' interest in self-governance activities. ARIS counted on “self-motivated people” willing to engage in implementation, but the mobilization of pasture users was difficult. One member of a Pasture Committee described his situation as follows:

“My wife is already very angry with me because I keep spending so much time with working for the community. I am always being asked to do more tasks. I have to pay for everything myself: paper, stamps, etc. She says that I should stop spending all my time for the community, because I do not get anything” (Kara Tash village, Pasture Committee member).

Also, ARIS did not reward the commitment of ARIS Community Officers for full resource user involvement, but insisted on plan fulfilment, while accepting low levels of participation. All interviewed ARIS Community Officers ques-

tioned the adequacy of the strict timeframe for Pasture Committee registration, which they considered to impact negatively upon resource user involvement. An initiative by ARIS Community Officers to modify the ARIS Implementation Plan to better meet citizens' capacities and needs, such as holding municipality meetings at a time of the year when the pastures users, most of them pastoralists, were actually present in the village, was not acknowledged by ARIS Management. Instead, ARIS Management encouraged the ARIS Community Officers to focus on registering Pasture Committees within the prescribed deadline.

Interviews revealed that ARIS Management staff had in fact abandoned the objective of reaching full municipality information by means of the prescribed measures in the ARIS Implementation Plan:

"... our staff [ARIS Community Officers] also cannot give information to everyone [in the municipality]. Of course it will take time. When the members of the Pasture Committee come to the house and collect payments, like the electrician for electricity, then people will maybe understand everything about the [pasture] law. I think in one or two years everybody will know about the pasture law, payment and taxes" (Representative of ARIS).

#### *6.4.3 Outcomes of the information campaign*

The impact of the created information working rules on pasture users' awareness of opportunities to participate in CBNRM was studied by means of 47 pasture user interviews. The analysis showed a very limited impact of the mainly municipality-run information dissemination activities by October 2009, when the Pasture Committees were to be officially registered.

Most respondents claimed to be informed about the existence of a Pasture Law; however, this knowledge was very vague and incomplete. Both groups, those who claimed to know about the law and, interestingly, also those who said they knew nothing, had a very incomplete understanding of its content. It was a surprise that several respondents who claimed to know nothing about any legal change were aware of at least some details of the CBNRM reform, such as the abandonment of rental payments for pastures and a decentralization of management authority.

Respondents were not aware of the future importance of the Pasture Committee in distributing pasture access rights and regulating the amount and spending of pasture user fees, to name some tasks. Some kind of Pasture Committee existed in all municipalities. Of all respondents, ten claimed to know the head of the municipality Pasture Committee. Only three among all respondents believed – correctly – that the Pasture Committee was the new responsible body for pasture management.

Participation opportunities were largely unknown to pasture users. First, not one respondent was aware of the existence of a Pasture User Union – of which, according to the law, all municipality residents are members. Neither did anyone know about the associated election rights for pasture users or any participation



opportunities. Also, no respondent embraced the idea that the Pasture Law had shifted pasture management and administration rights from state bodies to pasture users. Second, membership in the Pasture Committee was considered a privilege for selected community members. Those who had heard about the possibility to become a member in a Pasture Committee assumed that this membership was not open to “average or poor people” but only to “the active people,” “educated people,” the wealthy and owners of large herds, or members of the local elected community council. Furthermore, none of the respondents were aware of any future information transfer activities at the time the interviews were held. This was particularly striking in the municipality of Kara Tash, where – according to information provided by the ARIS Community Officers – the introductory village meeting was to be held three days after the interviews; still, none of the interview partners had heard of this upcoming meeting.

**Table 6-6: Respondents’ sources of CBNRM-related information**

	Ala Too	Bulak	Kara Tash	Total
<i>Awareness of Pasture Law</i>				
No	6	14	6	26
Yes	10	14	6	30
<i>Source of information</i>				
Paper	1	-	1	2
Radio	-	-	2	2
Television	1	3	-	4
Neighbor / family member	7	7	1	15
Municipality administration	1	3	2	6
Municipality council	-	-	-	-
Meeting at municipality/village level	-	1	-	1

Source: own representation

The formal information campaign had not been a relevant channel of information dissemination. Table 6-6 shows that informal information transfer proved more effective than formal information transfer and that the majority of those respondents, who claimed to be aware of a new law on pasture, had re-

ceived information via other channels. Only one interviewed non-office holder had participated in an information meeting on pasture management.

In all municipalities information transfer was obviously not inclusive and did not aim to reach the broader community. The interviews indicated that relevant and consistent information reached either only those individuals or families who maintain a tight relationship with the municipality administration or local activists or who were chosen for participation in the process of Pasture Committee establishment. The three respondents who were aware of the future role of the Pasture Committee were in fact relatives of the head of the administration or relatives of those who were designated Pasture Committee members, such as the father of a Pasture Committee member and a livestock expert whom the municipality administration had invited to become a member in the Pasture Committee, though he had not accepted.

The interviews showed that information channels used completely circumvented families and individuals who were not part of the communication network of those who had been selected for participation in CBNRM implementation. A case which exemplifies the lack of trickling-down of information, or the use of neutral information channels, are two neighbors in municipality Ala Too: while the sister of the head of the administration was by far the best-informed interviewed non-officeholder among all respondents, her neighbor, a forty-five-year-old male herder, was not aware of any legal changes in pasture management.

#### *6.4.4 Working rules for resource user mobilization*

Low resource user involvement resulted from incomplete information transfer as a result of simplification of implementation tasks by both types of SLBs: the ARIS Community Officers and the municipality administrators.

##### *6.4.4.1 Information campaign performance of municipality administrations*

Municipality administrations did not follow instructions of the ARIS Implementation Plan. Instead – as is characteristic for SLBs – they designed working rules that deviated strongly from the participatory principles prescribed in the ARIS Implementation Plan and greatly simplified information tasks.

According to the implementation plan, the information campaign required organization of the information meetings, ensuring awareness of these meetings – particularly among vulnerable municipality residents – providing household-level and street-level information, and making the relevant announcements on participation opportunities on blackboards.

Field data showed that municipality administrations did not effectively communicate information on participation opportunities to pasture users. Instead of formal and equally accessible public information, such as written material, only informal information dissemination was observed and reported. Information

material was not distributed in any municipality; the household-level information campaign was transformed into the personal invitation of individuals whom municipality administrators considered capable for participation in Pasture Committee. The information meetings were de facto neither open to all potential stakeholders, nor always held at the prescribed intervals. In the municipalities Ala Too and Bulak, personal invitations to constituent meetings for Pasture Committee establishment were the only information activity reported. Only in Kara Tash had a public meeting been held. However, this meeting had been part of a pasture-management-related training workshop of an NGO, and not all pasture users had been aware of it. An elderly animal owner in Kara Tash explained:

“We did not hear about a new pasture law you are talking about. The administration usually sends people and asks us to come [to community meetings], but we did not hear anything. ... If this law is there already, why is nothing going on in our village?” (Elderly animal owner, Kara Tash)

#### 6.4.4.2 Information campaign performance of ARIS Community Officers

During the implementation process, ARIS Community Officers modified their perception of the task allocated to them and introduced a number of routines: ARIS Community Officers ignored information requirements in the ARIS Implementation Plan. They did not ensure information dissemination to all groups of pasture users and municipality residents targeted in the ARIS Implementation Plan. They cut down the number of activities planned for the mobilization campaign and streamlined other resource user involvement activities and did not effectively supervise the resource user information activities they had shifted to the municipality administrators. They even accepted the exclusion of active herders in the process of Pasture Committee establishment (after their agency had not supported the idea to adapt the time schedule to the needs of herders) and allowed elderly ex-herders or other relatives to replace active herders who were on migration.

Instead of following the agency requirement of restarting the entire Pasture Committee formation in case of insufficient information transfer, they accepted minor reconfigurations in the composition of existing Pasture Committees, which had already been formed by municipality administrations, but did not meet participation requirements:

“We started in September. When we arrived here a lot of meetings had already been held in the municipality administrations. However, according to the requirements of the World Bank we had to hold meetings once more. Before [we arrived], according to explanations made by the [district] administration, Pasture Committees were formed in different ways in different municipalities. Now we see that the structure of the Pasture

Committee is very different in each AO<sup>1</sup>. For example in one Pasture Committee they have only 5, in another 23 members. Then we came and started to form the Pasture Committee with a minimum of 15 people in each. The head of the municipality administration is automatically in the Pasture Committee, representatives of ARIS are also in the committee, we call it Territorial Investment Committee, and we also require 5 delegates from the municipality council” (Community Development Officer).

The following example shows that the Community Development Officer in that municipality simplified resource user information: only one “municipality roundtable” was held; only selected participants received a basic introduction to the Pasture Law and the steps in the ARIS Implementation Plan. This meeting took place without particular citizen involvement. During this meeting, the initially formed Pasture Committee was slightly modified by adding members chosen in a top-down hand-picking procedure; this process just repeated the selection of participants in the first meetings.

The following statements by a Pasture Committee member in Ala Too clarify the process:

Interviewer: “As a member of the municipality council, did you know that there was a meeting with ARIS yesterday?”

Respondent: “I was not in the village because I was away for job training. It was announced only two days before. Actually they have to announce it five days before. Those who are close to the municipality administration knew it earlier. That is the way they [the administration] work. We have a mafia here. The agricultural officer in the municipality administration just came today and told me that I was included in the Pasture Committee which was formed yesterday. No one asked me.”

Interviewer: “Was there a Pasture Committee before?”

Respondent: “I do not know exactly. Since spring there has been something like an agricultural commission.”

Interviewer: “How many other people are on the Pasture Committee?”

Respondent: “I do not know.”

Interviewer: “When is the next meeting?”

Respondent: “I do not know.”

Pasture Committee establishment in Bulak followed the same office-holder addition logic:

---

<sup>11</sup> Municipality Administration

- Interviewer: “We heard there were some changes made when ARIS came for training...”
- Respondent: “Yes, we needed one more deputy from the municipality council on the Pasture Committee [that had been formed already]. They [ARIS Community Officers] said that the chairman of the [municipality] council had to be included and that we needed to get the head of the Territorial Investment Committee of the ARIS program on the Pasture Committee.”

#### 6.4.5 Determinants of working rule design

Due to time pressure and a lack of familiarity with the local conditions, ARIS Community Officers of the government-mandated implementing organization ARIS shifted the information campaign task to municipality administrators. Municipality administrators, however, ignored the prescribed public information campaign, which included public announcement of information meetings and distribution of information material specified by ARIS. Instead, municipality administrators selected pasture experts, honorable members of the community and their closer network and invited them for upcoming meetings and potential participation in the planned CBNRM self-governance organization, called Pasture Committee.

While this might be considered a strategy for rent seeking, I propose a different explanation: The responsibility for the information campaign was shifted from ARIS Community Officers – who had received training on CBNRM and therefore knew the relevance of the resource user information campaign – to municipality administrators, who had only received implementation information from ARIS Community Officers, but lacked any further training on CBNRM principles. Hence, municipality administrators in charge of the information campaign held a different perception of the required information dissemination activities. By contacting only those members of the community whom they deemed to possess the relevant expertise and influence, they followed a previously used, non-participatory, but rational strategy. They selected people whom they considered qualified for self-governance. This has to be seen as an existing local governance practice. It meets (at least) administrators’ perceptions of adequate transparency and accountability, according to which primarily those who will effectively manage the pastures – the potential Pasture Committee members – qualify for information access. This working rule, however, led to task performance which was non-participatory and sometimes clandestine.

The shift of responsibility for the information campaign was not accompanied by adequate steering by ARIS Community Officers for a number of reasons: First, they lacked time to monitor and control the performance of the information campaign. Second, besides insufficient means for enforcing the execution of information activities there was a lack of formal rules to regulate the cooperation between municipality administrators who were basically members

of the state administration, and ARIS Community Officers, who are employees of a government-mandated and donor-financed organization. Hence, municipality administrators are not formally accountable, neither to the ARIS Community Officers, nor to ARIS as an organization. Third, ARIS Community Officers' motivation for improving the quality of the information campaign abated after they recognized that ARIS showed little interest in the campaign. As discussed in Section 6.4.2.2, ARIS did not effectively support the proposed modification of rules for improving the outreach of the information campaign, as proposed by the ARIS Community Officers. Instead, ARIS encouraged them to meet the deadline for Pasture Committee formation in any case. My interpretation is that ARIS' denial of the ARIS Community Officers' request to adapt the dissemination strategy to municipality needs had two effects: it firstly made these Officers perceive their agency's main interest to be the timely formation of Pasture Committees instead of municipality information, and secondly, it led to some degree of frustration and therefore made Officers prefer to invest their limited time in the establishment of Pasture Committees (as preferred by ARIS) instead of sharing information about CBNRM principles with resource users.

ARIS Community Officers therefore enforced those participation requirements for Pasture Committee membership which were easy to observe and control, such as minimum number of members or participation of municipality council members.

## **6.5 Discussion and conclusions**

I aimed to answer the question how and which information rules are designed for Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) during the implementation of a pasture management reform in Kyrgyzstan and how they impact the distribution of CBNRM-related information. The research was motivated by an interest in filling a knowledge gap on determinants of the distribution of CBNRM-related benefits at resource user level, which has been linked to access to information and participation opportunities.

My data shows that information working rules were designed by the staff of a policy implementing organization in cooperation with municipality-level administrators. In contrast to implementing agency regulations – which aimed to involve all pasture users in CBNRM (albeit in different roles) – the designed information rules limited information access on CBNRM participation opportunities to resource users hand-picked by municipality-level administrators.

My study found difficult working conditions, both for staff of the policy implementing organization and for municipality administrators, who were heavily influenced by the governance structures to whom they reported. They had to cope with: a) an initially uncoordinated implementation process; b) unclear distribution of competencies; and c) delayed provision of insufficiently tailored

implementation rules, designed by the implementing organization, not its local staff. This has motivated the staff of the implementing agency to develop routines which aligned their own tasks with the available capacity and time and also satisfied the implementing organizations. However, these routines, which represent the actual information working rules, did not contribute to resource users' awareness of CBNRM participation opportunities. There are two reasons for this: a) municipality administrators adopted information working rules which they considered most successful, informing only a few instead of all resource users; b) staff of the implementing organization ignored their agency's secondary goal of ensuring full resource user participation and largely accepted the working rules created by municipality administrators.

This study explains information working rule design for donor-initiated policy implementation transaction as an unintentional effect that emerged from bounded rational (Simon 1997) choice of routines by lowest-level policy implementers'. This happened in an attempt to cope with difficulties and ambiguities in task prescriptions they had received from their agency. The developed routines serve to achieve satisfaction instead of optimization of decisions and processes. Satisficing led to the emergence of information rules which did not fulfil the donors' stated participation goals, but allowed keeping the timeline prescribed by the agency.

These findings pose theoretical implications. First, rule design motivated by satisficing leads to institutional persistence instead of institutional change. In the study case, employees of the implementing agency, in order to avoid difficult and time-consuming enforcement of agency rules, were satisfied with information working rules set by the municipality administrators. (It is important to note that between those actors no formal accountability relationship existed, but that municipality administrators felt accountable to the staff of the implementing agency due to the agency's proximity to the central government and donors.) Since municipality administrators also wanted to avoid time-consuming and potentially conflict-bearing full resource user involvement, they employed non-participatory, non-inclusive information rules which did not differ from previous practices, also not from those used during the Soviet period. This resulted in satisficing which encouraged institutional persistence, in other words path dependency, and hindered institutional change.

Second, the findings are in contrast to perceptions of institutional competition or rent-seeking theory, according to which actors would intentionally design rules which exclude others in order to increase their individual benefits. In the study case, rent-seeking does not play a role. This is, however, no surprise as at the time of data collection – a very early phase of CBNRM implementation in the pasture sector – those in charge of working rule design could not anticipate the potential economic rents associated with participation or non-participation in CBNRM. In 2009, municipality administrators, on the one hand, had no information on rules for fee collection, resource access or other potential economic

implications of CBNRM for the pasture sector in Kyrgyzstan. On the other hand, Community Development Officers did not entertain economic relationships with municipality residents and local pasture users because they are non-local external staff members of a non-local organization. Rent-seeking, however, might – under different circumstances, e.g. once the full potential of Pasture Committees is understood, rent-seeking may become a motivation for rule design.

The analytical framework was well-suited to structured data collection and analysis. The specifications of the actor-governance relationship, which I introduced with the concept of street-level bureaucracy, helped to explore a very important relationship in rule design during policy implementation processes, which is often not explored. The framework is appropriate for studying a rarely explored link between governance structures and working rule design. It offers an explanation for actors' choice of action, which is well accepted in public administration theory, but has to date not received much attention in institutional analysis. The study therefore revealed the impact that governance structures, via their procedural regulations and practices, have on working rule design. It helps to study the (only implicit) relationships and mechanisms by which governance structures impact actors' behaviour.

The application of the framework remains a challenge. Each of the framework's elements requires extensive background research (legal reviews, exploring and mapping of actor networks, study of actor characteristics at different administrative levels, exploration of governance structures and the linkages between these elements), which is only possible by using in-depth case studies with qualitative research methods combined with other data collection methods. Such data collection is time-consuming and requires substantial funding. Besides, research on the characteristics of governance structures is risky, particularly in environments where governance structures are intentionally opaque. In such environments, rules of conduct are difficult to understand and respondents might hesitate to reveal insights into ongoing governance practices. Hence, there is a risk that substantial data gaps might remain, endangering the success of the research.

This leads to a further limitation of the study. The present study reports on the first year after proclamation of the Pasture Law, which was characterized by confusion about the adequate implementation on all administrative levels. Therefore, the study's findings about very low levels of resource user information require careful interpretation, and it is very likely that information has since been transferred by various means, increasing awareness of the pasture management reform.

The study has practical implications for designing CBNRM implementation. The findings emphasize that implementation and information transfer in particular, as well as the goal of active resource user participation, require a well-designed, time-consuming strategy. Strategies based on blueprint perceptions of simple, local, informal information transfer or an assumed automatism accord-



ing to which information, once provided to a limited number of people, quickly spreads to all members of the resource user group, including minorities and vulnerable segments of the population, are insufficient. Similarly incorrect is the assumption that resource users are eager to participate in municipality-level activities. The local situation is, instead, that a small group of actors with a limited capacity, voluntarily or under pressure, assumes offices and is only partly interested in self-governance. Therefore, careful planning and full acknowledgement of local policy implementers' roles, resources and perceptions of reward structures, as well as resource users' capacities and interests, is required to create effective implementation strategies.

Implementation strategies must also encompass trainings which ensure a complete understanding and acceptance of all objectives, including intermediary objectives, such as full resource user awareness of ongoing changes, among implementers at all hierarchy levels, and particularly among those working at the service frontline. The strategy must cover rules which are complementary to the working environment of local policy implementers. Designers of implementation strategies need to understand decision making among implementation actors. The study's findings clearly show the need to fully acknowledge the implementation contexts. Therefore, the implementation strategy design must be preceded by a review of the hierarchical relationships of CBNRM policy implementers, including those at different levels of the administrative system, in order to develop meaningful monitoring and enforcement mechanisms which go beyond command and control and allow for a meaningful evaluation of participatory activities. There is also a need to review existing information channels by which different groups at each municipality level can be reached. Information on resource users' availability and capacity for participation is also needed. It is obvious that local policy implementers play a key role as sources of information. However, they should also participate in designing meaningful rules and tools for CBNRM implementation.

## 7 Conclusions

The essays in this book examine agricultural service decentralization in the Central Asian Kyrgyz Republic. They explore agricultural service decentralization strategies and outcomes at the municipality level. They contribute to the hitherto very limited literature on the decentralization of agricultural services in post-socialist developing countries. Decentralization of services is generally assumed to lead to improved service provision, the idea being that shifting service provision responsibility from state to private actors increases service providers' accountability towards service users and allows services to be more specifically tailored to local needs. However, the results of my research based on four case studies drawn from different agricultural services exhibit a surprising degree of decentralization failure. They show that agricultural service decentralization, as designed and implemented to date, has improved neither the quality nor availability of services. The specific conclusions of each case study can be found in the respective chapters. In this section, I deduce from my findings some practical conclusions how decentralization strategy design and research could be improved.

Following withdrawal of the state and in the absence of an emerging private agricultural service sector, international NGOs have become the most important or, often, the sole provider of agricultural services at municipality level in the Kyrgyz Republic. Therefore, municipality-level service availability depends in practice, firstly, on the international NGO's decisions about the geographical distribution of specific agricultural service projects; and secondly, on the motivation and ability of municipality-level decision-makers to apply for this NGO-type of support on behalf of their community.

The involvement of international donor organizations has not increased service providers' accountability to service users. In practice, the international NGO determines which agricultural services are to be provided in the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as where and how. The research in this book revealed that the most common strategy pursued by the international NGO for municipality-level service provision is the community-based service provision group. The research further show that this approach has not proved effective in the Kyrgyz Republic: the community-based service provision groups observed there did not meet farmers' expectations and also failed to mobilize full community involvement.

The research found that externally designed decentralization strategies and implementation plans had been applied. These so-called blueprints are based on false assumptions about municipality-level decision-making and participation, and consequently have a negative impact on municipality involvement. Inappropriate planning assumptions are generally rooted, firstly, in oversimplified notions of how participatory service groups can be implemented in the absence of

a culture of deliberation, open debate, and democratic representation; and secondly, in a failure to fully recognize the role of the municipality-level project implementers who are in charge of making the decentralization project work on the ground.

The present research therefore demonstrates the urgent need to adjust project design and implementation strategies for externally driven service decentralization. This is of particular relevance when—as in the case of the Kyrgyz pasture management reform—the donor organization becomes the driving force behind project implementation, i.e. finds itself guiding developments, because the government itself lacks the capacity and experience to deliver novel project approaches.

In terms of service planning, three important issues need to be considered: service user' preferences for specific services, their motivation for participation in service user groups, and the capacity of their communities to get involved in community-based management. Therefore a number of planning assumptions need to be critically reviewed:

- service user preferences for services and service needs as perceived by the international NGO as service provider can differ greatly
- service users might not necessarily prefer community-based service provision over other (state or private) forms of service provision which require less personal involvement
- at municipality level, information on participation opportunities is not made publicly available and/or used as leverage in village politics
- an externally driven participatory service provision strategy does not necessarily lead to democratic decision-making.

With regard to the planning of service decentralization implementation, it is vital to take into account the local administrative and decision-making context. In the cases examined here, service decentralization implementation did shift much responsibility and discretionary power to municipality administrators (such as the head of the municipality-level administration) as well as to **municipality**-level staff of the international NGO. However, the international NGO, when designing the implementation strategy, failed to acknowledge the importance of local-level decentralization and the project implementers' personal perceptions of their tasks and scope of action. One proposal based on my research findings is accordingly that project (implementation) planners should review their assumptions regarding municipality-level roles, decision-making processes, and means of information transfer in order to better align project objectives and project outcomes. My research further showed that the interests, capacities in terms of knowledge and time resources, and working environments of the local policy implementers—who by definition have broad scope to take decisions and action at their personal discretion—can have a major impact on their motivation and

hence also on the outcomes of service reform implementation. Therefore, the design of implementation rules must be adjusted to the administrative context within which local-level project implementers operate and which shapes their perceptions of their implementation of work tasks and their scope for action. With regard to municipality-level policy implementers (local administrators, local staff of implementing organizations) more attention must accordingly be given to:

- their involvement in accountability relationships//structures
- their access to project implementation resources
- the implementation rules they are bound to and their understanding thereof
- their perceptions of the tasks to be implemented, and
- their present capacity and further training needs.

The reason for the inappropriate design of rules as described above is that donor-driven implementation strategies are based on a number of premises that lack empirical foundations. One major conclusion of the present research is that if decentralization projects//agricultural service decentralization in the post-Soviet realm are//is ever to be effectively designed, then solely on the basis of more qualitative research that can broaden and consolidate the empirical data available to date. This simultaneously implies that blueprint assumptions about the lives, interests, and decision-making structures of rural individuals and communities, and—very importantly—their lowest-level policy implementers must be abandoned; and it further implies that policy implementation assumptions based on experiences made in other administrative contexts than the relevant current one must be fundamentally called into question. What is required, to sum up, is careful acknowledgement of the specific implementation background in hand as well as the kind of detailed, in-depth knowledge that can be gained solely through qualitative data collection and analysis: knowledge of local-level decision-making structures, local-level administrative processes and capacities, and local-level information flows.

For such empirical research to fulfill its potential to effectively inform policy and policy implementation design, two things are required: firstly, a solid commitment to allocating sufficient time and resources to detailed, local-level qualitative studies; and secondly, a willingness to acknowledge and adopt the findings of such studies in policy implementation design.

The theoretical focus of this research was to better understand local-level processes of institutional change. Institutional change has not materialized as originally intended. The theoretical lens of the case studies in this research is institutional economics. The novel theoretical approach employed in this study is to consider policy implementation outcomes to result from individual instances of working rule design by local-level policy implementers. Until now, institutional

economics has not further specified the role of policy implementers as rule designers but has mainly been concerned with either the policymaker or the resource user.

My proposal to explore the role of these actors makes an important contribution to institutional theory. Community-based approaches to resource management or service provision have become a widespread policy recommendation in recent years. Hence, external policy implementers have become an important role model for the local-level design of community-based resource management. The case studies in this book highlight the important role played by local-level policy implementers, a role which has been largely overlooked until now, in institutional analysis in general and in decentralization research in particular. In this book I suggest how to use institutional theory as a means to better account for the impact these actors have. I believe that my proposal to combine Ostroms' leveled approach to institutional analysis with the use of Ostroms' grammar of institutions for the exploration of local rule constellations, and Lipskys' concept of street-level bureaucrats as a means to structure the study of municipality-level decision-making constitutes an effective analysis of municipality-level policy implementation and can help explain decentralization approaches under the specific conditions prevailing still in several post-socialist countries: namely, top-down implementation of bottom-up decentralization strategies.

## References

- ADB (2012). Kyrgyz Republic. Evolving Transition to a Market Economy. Manila, Philippines.
- Agrawal, Arun (2001). Common Property Institutions and Sustainable Governance of Resources. *World Development* 29 (10), 1649–1672.
- Agrawal, Arun and Ostrom, Elinor (2001). Collective action, property rights, and decentralization in resource use in India and Nepal. *Politics and Society* 29 (4), 485–514.
- Agrawal, Arun and Ostrom, Elinor (2007). Decentralization and community-based forestry: learning from experience. In: Webb, Edward L. and Shivakoti, Ganesh (eds.) *Decentralization, forests and rural communities: Policy outcomes in South and Southeast Asia*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 44–67.
- Agrawal, Arun and Ribot, Jesse C. (1999). Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Cases. *Journal of Developing Areas* 33 (4), 473–502.
- Allio, Lorene; Dobek, Mariusz Mark; Mikhailov, Nikolai and Weimer, David L. (1997). Post-communist Privatization as a Test of Theories of Institutional Change. In: Weimer, D.L. (ed.) *The Political Economy of Property Rights: Institutional Change and Credibility in the Reform of Centrally Planned Economies*. Cambridge University Press, 319–348.
- Alymkulov, Emil and Kulatov, Marat (2002). Local Government in the Kyrgyz Republic. In: Munteanu, Igor (ed.) *Developing new rules in the old environment*. Budapest, 521–600.
- Atmiş, Erdoğan; Özden, Sezgin and Lise, Wietze (2007). Public participation in forestry in Turkey. Special Section: Ecological-economic modelling for designing and evaluating biodiversity conservation policies *EE Modelling Special Section* 62 (2), 352–359.
- Babajanian, Babken; Freizer, Sabine and Stevens, Daniel (2005). Introduction: Civil Society in Central Asia And the Caucasus. *Central Asian Survey* 24 (3), 209–224.
- Baimyrzaeva, Mahabat (2005). Institutional Reforms in Kyrgyzstan. *Central Eurasian Studies Review* 4 (1), 29–33.
- Baimyrzaeva, Mahabat (2010). Analysis of Kyrgyzstan's administrative reforms in the light of its recent governance challenges. *International Public Management Review* 12 (1), 22–47.
- Banks, Tony; Richard, Camille; Ping, Li and Zhaoli, Yan (2003). Community-Based Grassland Management in Western China Rationale, Pilot Project Experience, and Policy Implications. *Mountain Research and Development* 23 (2), 132–140.
- Bardhan, Pranab K. (2002). Decentralization of Governance and Development. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 16 (4), 185–205.
- Bardhan, Pranab K. and Mookherjee, Dilip (eds.) (2006a). *Decentralization and local governance in developing countries*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Bardhan, Pranab K. and Mookherjee, Dilip (2006b). Decentralization, Corruption and Government Accountability. In: Rose-Ackerman, Susan (ed.) *International handbook on the economics of corruption*. Cheltenham: Elgar, 161–188.

- Bardhan, Pranab K. and Mookherjee, Dilip (2006c). The rise of local governments: an overview. In: Bardhan, Pranab K. and Mookherjee, Dilip (eds.) *Decentralization and local governance in developing countries: A comparative perspective*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1–52.
- Baschieri, Angela and Falkingham, Jane (2006). Formalizing Informal Payments: The Progress of Health Reform in Kyrgyzstan. *Central Asian Survey* 25 (4), 441–460.
- Becker, Markus C. (2004). Organizational Routines: a Review of the Literature. *Industrial and Corporate Change* 13 (4), 643–677.
- Behnke, Roy; Jabbar, Abdul; Budanov, Akmohammet and Davidson, Grant (2005). The Administration and Practice of Leasehold Pastoralism in Turkmenistan. *Nomadic Peoples* 9 (1), 147–169.
- Blaikie, Piers (2006). Is Small Really Beautiful? Community-based Natural Resource Management in Malawi and Botswana. *World Development* 34 (11), 1942–1957.
- Blair, Harry (2001). Institutional pluralism in public administration and politics: applications in Bolivia and Peru. *Public Administration and Development* 21, 119–129.
- Boeije, Hennie (2002). A Purposeful Approach to the Constant Comparative Method in the Analysis of Qualitative Interviews. *Quality and Quantity* 36 (4), 391–409.
- Bogner, Alexander; Littig, Beate and Menz, W. (eds.) (2009). *Interviewing experts*. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bogner, Alexander and Menz, Wolfgang (2009). The theory-generating expert interview. In: Bogner, Alexander; Littig, Beate and Menz, W. (eds.) *Interviewing experts*. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 43–80.
- Brinkerhoff, Derick W. (1996). Coordination issues in Policy Implementation Networks. *World Development* 24 (9), 1497–1510.
- Brinkerhoff, Derick W. (2001). Taking Account of Accountability. URL: [http://www.msiworldwide.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/IPC\\_Taking\\_Account\\_of\\_Accountability.pdf](http://www.msiworldwide.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/IPC_Taking_Account_of_Accountability.pdf)
- Brinkerhoff, Derick W.; Brinkerhoff, Jennifer M. and McNulty, Stephanie (2007). Decentralization and Participatory Local Governance: a Decision Space Analysis and Application to Peru. In: Cheema, G. Shabbir and Rondinelli, Dennis A. (eds.) *Decentralizing Governance: Emerging Concepts and Practices*. Harvard, Washington, Cambridge, Mass.: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; Brookings Institution Press, 189–211.
- Callahan, Kathe (2007). Accountability dilemmas. In: Callahan, Kathe (ed.) *Elements of effective governance: Measurement, accountability and participation*. Boca Raton, Fla.: Taylor & Francis, 125–144.
- Cheema, G. Shabbir and Rondinelli, Dennis A (2007). From Government Decentralization to Decentralized Governance. In: Cheema, G. Shabbir and Rondinelli, Dennis A. (eds.) *Decentralizing Governance: Emerging Concepts and Practices*. Harvard, Washington, Cambridge, Mass.: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; Brookings Institution Press, 1–20.
- Clark, Gordon (1984). A theory of local autonomy. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 74 (2), 195–208.
- Cleaver, Frances (2005). The inequality of social capital and the reproduction of chronic poverty. *World Development* 33 (6), 893–906.
- Cohen, John M and Peterson, Stephen B (1996). *Methodological Issues in the Analysis of Decentralization*. Harvard, Washington.

- Cohen, John M and Peterson, Stephen B (2002). *Administrative decentralization*. West Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press.
- Collins, Kathleen (2002). Clans, Pacts, and Politics in Central Asia. *Journal of Democracy* 13 (3), 137–152.
- Commons, John R. (1931). Institutional Economics. *American Economic Review* 21, 648–657.
- Commons, John R. (1932). The Problem of Correlating Law Economics and Ethics. *Wisconsin Law Review* 8, 3–26.
- Commons, John R. (1957). *Legal foundations of capitalism*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Cornwall, Andrea (2003). Whose Voices? Whose Choices? Reflections on Gender and Participatory Development. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology: Section A* 31 (8), 1325–1342.
- Crawford, Sue E. and Ostrom, Elinor (1995). A Grammar of Institutions. *The American Political Science Review* 89 (3), 582.
- Crewett, Wibke (2003). Wirkungen Institutionellen Wandels der Agrarverfassung am Beispiel der ehemaligen Sowjetrepublik Kirgisien - Studienprojektbericht. Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.
- Crewett, Wibke (2012). Improving the Sustainability of Pasture Use in Kyrgyzstan. *Mountain Research and Development* 32 (3), 267–274.
- Crewett, Wibke (2015a). Institutional Change in the Kyrgyz Irrigation Sector. A Short Introduction to the Reform.
- Crewett, Wibke (2015b). Introducing decentralized pasture governance in Kyrgyzstan. Designing implementation rules. *Environmental Science & Policy* (in press).
- Crewett, Wibke (2015c). Street-Level Bureaucrats at Work: A Municipality-Level Institutional Analysis of Community-Based Natural Resource Management Implementation Practice in the Pasture Sector of Kyrgyzstan. *Sustainability* 7 (3), 3146–3174.
- Crook, Richard C and Sverrisson, Alan Sturla (2001a). Decentralisation and poverty-alleviation in developing countries. Brighton: Inst. of Development Studies.
- Crook, Richard C and Sverrisson, Alan Sturla (2001b). Decentralisation and Poverty-alleviation in Developing Countries: A Comparative Analysis or, is West Bengali Unique? Brighton, Sussex.
- Csáki, Csaba; Lerman, Zvi and Sotnikov, Sergey (2000). *Farm sector restructuring in Belarus*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Csáki, Csaba and Tuck, Laura (2000). *Rural Development Strategy*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- de la Vega-Leinert, A. C. (2000). Fiscal Decentralization and Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations: A Cross-Country Analysis. *World Development* 28 (2), 365–380.
- Demsetz, Harold (1967). Toward a Theory of Property Rights. *The American economic review* 57 (2), 347–359.
- Dietz, Thomas; Ostrom, Elinor and Stern, Paul C. (2003). The Struggle to Govern the Commons. *Science* (302), 1907–1912.
- Dinar, Ariel; Kemper, Karin; Blomquist, William and Kurukulasuriya, Pradeep (2007). Whitewater: Decentralization of river basin water resource management. *Journal of Policy Modeling* 29 (6), 851–867.



- Dörre, Andrei (2012). Legal Arrangements and Pasture-Related Socio-ecological Challenges in Kyrgyzstan. In: Kreutzmann, Hermann (ed.) *Pastoral practices in High Asia*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 127–144.
- Dörre, Andrei and Borchardt, Peter (2012). Changing Systems, Changing Effects—Pasture Utilization in the Post-Soviet Transition. *Mountain Research and Development* 32 (3), 313–323.
- Dressler, Wolfram; Büscher, Bram; Schoon, Michael; Brockington, Dan; (Hayes, Tanya, Kull, Christian); McCarthy, James and Shrestha, Krishna K. (2010). From hope to crisis and back again? A critical history of the global CBNRM narrative. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (1), 5–15.
- Dukenbaev, Askat and Hansen, William W. (2003). *Understanding Politics in Kyrgyzstan*. University of Aarhus.
- Dukenbayev, Askat (2004). *Problems and Perspectives of Decentralization in Kyrgyzstan*. St. Louis.
- Dumas, P.; Jimenez, H.; Léopold, M.; Petro, G. and Jimmy, R. (2010). Effectiveness of village-based marine reserves on reef invertebrates in Emau, Vanuatu. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 364–372.
- Edwards, Michael and Hulme, David (1996). Too close for comfort? the impact of official aid on nongovernmental organizations. *World Development* 24 (6), 961–973.
- Engval, Johan (2007). Kyrgyzstan: anatomy of a state. *Problems of Post-Communism* 54 (4), 33–45.
- Eun, Jaeho (2010). Public Accountability in Collaborative Governance. *The Korean Journal of Political Studies* 25 (1), 143–173.
- FAO (2015). FAOSTAT. <http://faostat.fao.org/>
- Farrington, John D. (2005). De-Development in Eastern Kyrgyzstan and Persistence of Semi-nomadic Livestock Herding. *Nomadic Peoples* 9, 171–197.
- Fitzherbert, Anthony (2006). *Kyrgyzstan*. Rome.
- Foddy, William H. (1993). *Constructing questions for interviews and questionnaires*. Cambridge, UK, New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuhr, Harald (1999/2000). Institutional change and new incentive structures for development: can decentralization and better local governance help? *WeltTrends* (25), 21–51.
- Glaser, Barney G. (1965). Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis, *The Social Problems* 12 (4), 436–445.
- Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (n. d.). Kyrgyzstan. URL: <http://www.g-fras.org/en/97-world-wide-extension-study/asia/central-asia/303-kyrgyzstan.html?highlight=WyJreXJneXoiXQ==#extension-providers>.
- Goetz, Klaus H. (2001). Making sense of post-communist central administration: modernization, Europeanization or Latinization? *Journal of European Public Policy* 8 (6), 1032–1051.
- Goletti, Francesco and Chabot, Philippe (2000). Food policy research for improving the reform of agricultural input and output markets in Central Asia. *Food Policy* (25), 661–679.
- Grävingholt, Jörn; Doerr, Bettina; Meissner, Kathrin; Pletziger, Stefan; Rümker, Julia von and Weikert, Jochen (2006). *Strengthening participation through decentralisation*. Bonn: German Development Institute.

- Gregersen, Hans; Contreras-Hermosilla, Arnoldo; Whity, Andy and Philipps, Lauren (2004). *Forest Governance in Federal Systems: An Overview of Experiences and Implications for Decentralization*. Jakarta: SMK Grafika Desa Putra.
- Gruber, James S. (2010). Key Principles of Community-based Natural Resource Management: a Synthesis and Interpretation of Identified Effective Approaches for Managing the Commons. *Environmental management* 45 (1), 52–66.
- Hagedorn, Konrad (2008). Particular Requirements for Institutional Analysis in Nature-related Sectors. *European review of agricultural economics*. ERAE 35 (3), 357–384.
- Hagedorn, Konrad; Arzt, Katja and Peters, Ursula (2002). Institutional Arrangements for Environmental Co-operatives. In: Hagedorn, Konrad (ed.) *Environmental co-operation and institutional change: Theories and policies for European agriculture*. Cheltenham Glos: Elgar, 3–25.
- Hagedorn, Konrad and Gatzweiler, Franz (2003). The Evolution of Institutions in Transition. *International Journal of Agricultural Resources, Governance and Ecology* 2 (1), 37–58.
- Hanisch, Markus (2003). *Property reform and social conflict*. Aachen: Shaker.
- Hardin, Garrett (1968). The Tragedy of the Commons. *Science* (162), 1243–1248.
- Herrfahrdt, Elke; Kipping, Martin; Pickardt, Tanja; Polak, Mathias and Rohrer, Caroline (2006). *Water governance in the Kyrgyz agricultural sector*. Bonn: DIE.
- Hill, Heather C. (2003). Understanding Implementation: Street-Level Bureaucrats' Resources for Reform. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART* 13 (3), 265–282.
- Hill, Michael and Hupe, Peter (2002). *Implementing public policy*. London: SAGE.
- Hill, Michael and Hupe, Peter (2009). *Implementing public policy*. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.
- Hjern, B. and Porter, D. O. (1981). Implementation Structures: A New Unit of Administrative Analysis. *Organization studies* 2 (3), 211–227.
- Hodgson, Geoffrey M. (2007). Institutions and Individuals: Interaction and Evolution. *Organization studies* 28 (1), 95–116.
- Hodgson, Geoffrey M. (2006). What are Institutions? *Journal of Economic Issues* XL, 1–25.
- Hupe, Peter and Hill, Michael (2007). Street-level bureaucracy and public accountability. *Public Administration* 85 (2), 279–299.
- Illner, Michal (2000). Issues of the Decentralization Reforms in Former Communist Countries. *Informationen zur Raumentwicklung* 7/8, 391–402.
- IMF and World Bank (2006). *Kyrgyz Republic: Enhanced Initiative for Heavily Indebted Countries*.
- INTRAC (2011). *Decentralization in Kyrgyzstan*.
- Jiang, Hong (2006). Decentralization, Ecological Construction, and the Environment in post-reform China: Case study from Uxin Banner, Inner Mongolia. *World Development* 34 (11), 1907–1921.
- Johnson, Craig (2001). Local Democracy, Democratic Decentralisation and Rural Development: Theories, Challenges and Options for Policy. *Development Policy Review* 19 (4), 521–532.
- Johnson III, Sam H.; Stoutjesdijk, Joop and Djailobayev, Nurlan (2002). *Irrigation reform in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Beijing.

- Jones Luong, Pauline (2004). Economic "Decentralization" in Kazakhstan. In: Jones Luong, Pauline (ed.) *The transformation of Central Asia: States and societies from Soviet rule to independence*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 182–211.
- Kaiser, Kai; Pattinasarany, Daan and Schulze, Günther G. (2006). Decentralization, Governance and Public services in Indonesia. In: Smoke, Paul J.; Gómez, Eduardo J. and Peterson, George E. (eds.) *Decentralization in Asia and Latin America: Towards a comparative interdisciplinary perspective*. Cheltenham, UK, Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 164–207.
- Karashev, Aaly A. and Tarbinski, Oleg S. (2002). Legal and institutional framework of local authorities in the Kyrgyz Republic. Bishkek.
- Kerven, Carol; Alimaev, Ilya Ilych; Behnke, Roy; Davidson, Grant; Franchois, Leen; Malma-kov, Nurlan; Mathijs, Erik; Smailov, Aidos; Temirbekov, Sayat and Wright, Iain (2004). Retraction and Expansion of Flock Mobility in Central Asia: Costs and Consequences. *African Journal of Range & Forage Science* 21 (3), 159–169.
- Kerven, Carol; Steimann, Bernd; Ashley, Laurie; Dear, Chad and ur Rahim, Inam (2011). Pastoralism and farming in Central Asia. Bishkek.
- Kerven, Carol; Steimann, Bernd; Dear, Chad and Ashley, Laurie (2012). Researching the Future of Pastoralism in Central Asia's Mountains: Examining Development Ortho-doxies. *Mountain Research and Development* 32 (3), 368–377.
- Khaleghian, Peyvand (2004). Decentralization and Public Services: the Case of Immuniza-tion. *Social Science and Medicine* 59 (1), 163–183.
- Kingston, Christopher and Caballero, Gonzalo (2009). Comparing theories of institutional change. *Journal of Institutional Economics* 5 (2), 151–180.
- Kiser, Larry L. and Ostrom, Elinor (1982). The three worlds of action: a metatheoretical synthesis of institutional approaches. In: Ostrom, Elinor (ed.) *Strategies of political inquiry*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 179–222.
- Kiser, Larry L. and Ostrom, Elinor (2000). The three worlds of action: a metatheoretical synthesis of institutional approaches. In: McGinnis, Michael Dean (ed.) *Polycentric games and institutions: Readings from the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Univ. of Michigan Press, 56–88.
- Knight, Jack (1992). *Institutions and social conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Korten, David C. (1990). *Getting to the 21st Century*. West Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press.
- Kulov, Sayakbay (2007). *Total Economic Evaluation of Kyrgyzstan Pastoralism*.
- Küsters, Ivonne (2009). *Narrative Interviews: Grundlagen und Anwendungen*. Wiesbaden: VS, Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Lampietti, Julian A.; Banerjee, Sudeshna Ghosh and Branczik, Amelia (2007). *People and Power*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Lee, Raymond M. (1999). *Doing research on sensitive topics*. London: SAGE.
- Lee, Raymond M. and Renzetti, Claire M. (1990). The problems of researching sensitive topics. *American Behavioural Scientist* 33 (5).
- Leisher, Craig; Hess, Sebastiaan; Boucher, Timothy M.; van Beukering, Pieter and Sanjayan, M. (2012). Measuring the Impacts of Community-based Grasslands Management in Mongolia's Gobi. *PLoS ONE* 7 (2), e30991 EP.
- Lemos, Maria Carmen and Agrawal, Arun. (2006). *Environmental governance. Annual re-view of environment and resources*.

- Leschenko, Natalie and Troschke, Manuela (2006). Fiscal Decentralization in Centralized States. München: Osteuropa-Institut.
- Libman, Alexander (2008). The Economic Role of Public Administration in Central Asia. Mannheim.
- Liebert, Saltanat and Tiulegenov, Medet (2013). Public Administration in Kyrgyzstan. In: Liebert, Saltanat; Condrey, Stephen and Goncharov, Dimitry (eds.) Public Administration in Post-Communist Countries: Former Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe, and Mongolia: CRC Press.
- Light, Miles K. (2007). Agriculture in Kyrgyzstan: growth engine or safety net?
- Lipsky, Michael (1980). Street-Level Bureaucracy. New York: SAGE.
- Lo Cascio, Amanda and Beilin, Ruth (2010). Of biodiversity and boundaries: a case study of community-based natural resource management practice in the Cardamom Mountains, Cambodia. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 347–355.
- Mansuri, Ghazala and Rao, Vijayendra (2004). Community-based and -driven development. *The World Bank Research Observer* 19 (1), 1–39.
- March, James G and Olsen, Johan P. (2006). The Logic of Appropriateness. In: Moran, Michael; Rein, Martin and Goodin, Robert E. (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Public Policy*: in 2006. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 689–708.
- Martini, Maira (2013). Overview of Corruption and Anti-corruption in Kyrgyzstan. URL: <http://www.u4.no/publications/overview-of-corruption-and-anti-corruption-in-kyrgyzstan/>.
- Matsui, Kazuhisa (2005). Post-Decentralization Regional Economies and Actors: Putting the Capacity of Local Governments to the Test. *The Developing Economies* 18 (1).
- MAWRPI; IDA and ARIS (2007). Kyrgyz Republic. Agricultural Investments and Services project. Environmental Assessment and Management Plan.
- MAWRPI; IDA and ARIS (2008). Agricultural Investments and Services Project. Environmental Assessment and Management Plan.
- Maynard-Moody, Steven (1989). *Beyond implementation: Developing an Institutional Theory of Administrative Policy Making*. *Public Administration Review* 49(2), 137–143.
- Mayring, Philipp (2004). Qualitative Content Analysis. In: Flick, U.; von Kardoff, E. and Steinke, I. (eds.) *A Companion to Qualitative Research*: SAGE, 266–270.
- McCarthy, John F. (2004). Changing to Gray: Decentralization and the Emergence of Volatile Socio-Legal Configurations in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. *World Development* 32 (7), 1199–1223.
- Milczarek, Dominika (2002). Privatisation as a Process of Institutional Change. Aachen: Shaker.
- Mosse, David (1997). The symbolic making of a common property resource. *Development and Change* 28 (3), 467–504.
- Mudahar, Mohinder S. (1998). Kyrgyz Republic: Strategy for Rural Growth and Poverty Alleviation. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Mukanova, Nuruipa (2008). Assessing 'New Public Management' reforms in Kyrgyzstan. In: Peters, B. Guy (ed.) *Mixes, matches, and mistakes: New public management in Russia and the former Soviet republics*. Budapest, 197–259.
- Mulgan, Richard (2000). 'Accountability': An Ever-Expanding Concept? *Public Administration* 78 (3), 555–573.

- Nikitina, Elena; Ostrovskaya, Elena and Fomenko, Marina (2010). Towards better water governance in river basins: Some lessons learned from the Volga. *Regional Environmental Change* 10 (4), 285–297.
- Nkhata, Bimo and Breen, Charles M. (2010). Performance of community-based natural resource governance for the Kafue Flats (Zambia). *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 296–302.
- North, Douglass C. (1991). Institutions. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5 (1), 97–112.
- NSC (2009). Population and Housing Census of the Kyrgyz republic of 2009. Bishkek.
- Oakerson, Ronald J. and Parks, Roger B. (1989). Local Government Constitutions: A Different View of Metropolitan Governance. *The American Review of Public Administration* 19 (4), 279–294.
- Olowu, Dele (2003). Local Institutional and Political Structures and Processes: Recent Experience in Africa. *Public Administration and Development* 23 (1), 41–52.
- O'Neill, Kathleen (2003). Decentralization as an electoral strategy. *Comparative Political Studies* 36, 1068–1091.
- Ostrom, Elinor (1990). *Governing the Commons*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Ostrom, Elinor (1999). Institutional rational choice. In: Sabatier, Paul A. (ed.) *Theories of the policy process*. Boulder: Westview Press, 35–71.
- Ostrom, Elinor (2005). *Understanding Institutional Diversity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.
- Parker, Pete and Thapa, Brijesh (2011). Distribution of benefits based on household participation roles in decentralized conservation within Kanchenjunga Conservation Area Project, Nepal. *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 13 (5), 879–899.
- Parsons, Wayne (1995). *Public policy*. Aldershot: Elgar.
- Patton, Michael Quinn (2001). Purposeful sampling. *Ethnography*, 106–121.
- Pétrie, Boris-Mathieu (2005). Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan or the birth of a globalized protectorate. *Central Asian Survey* 24 (3), 319–332.
- Pincus, Jonathan (2001). The post-Washington Consensus and Lending Operations in Agriculture. In: Fine, Ben; Lapavistas, Costas and Pincus, Jonathan (eds.) *Development policy in the twenty-first century: Beyond the post-Washington consensus*. London: Routledge, 182–218.
- Pomfret, Richard W. (2002). *Constructing a Market Economy: Diverse Paths from Central Planning in Asia and Europe*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Pomfret, Richard W. (2006). *The Central Asian Economies After Independence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Pomfret, Richard W. (2007). Central Asia Since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union: Economic Reforms and Their Impact on State-society Relations. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 6 (1), 1569–1497.
- Ribot, Jesse C. (2002a). *African Decentralization*. Washington DC: World Resources Institute
- Ribot, Jesse C. (2002b). *Democratic decentralization of natural resources*. Washington DC: World Resources Institute
- Robinson, S.; Milner-Gulland, E.J and Alimaev, I. (2003). Rangeland Degradation in Kazakhstan During the Soviet Era: Re-examining the Evidence. *Journal of Arid Environments* 53 (3), 419–439.
- Robinson, Sarah; Whitton, Mark; Biber-Klemm, Susette and Muzofirshoev, Nodaleb (2010). The Impact of Land-Reform Legislation on Pasture Tenure in Gorno-Badakhshan:

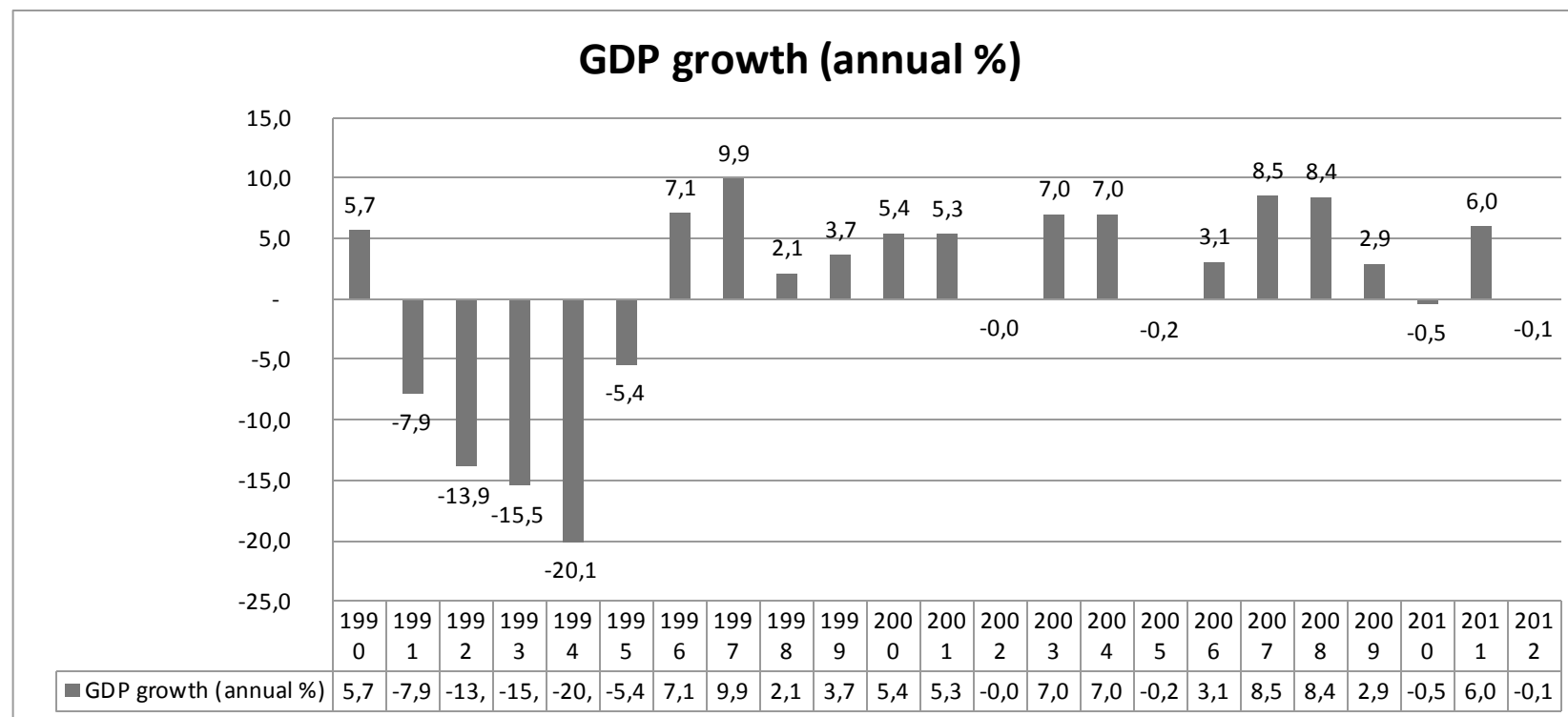
- From Common Resource to Private Property? *Mountain Research and Development* 30 (1), 4–13.
- Rodriguez-Izquierdo, Emili; Gavin, Michael C.; and Macedo-Bravo, Miguel O. (2010). Barriers and triggers to community participation across different stages of conservation management. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 239–249.
- Romeo, Leonardo G. (2003). The Role of External Assistance in Supporting Decentralisation Reform. *Public Administration and Development* 23 (1), 89–96.
- Romzek, Barbara S. (2000). Accountability on Congressional Staff. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART* 10 (2), 413–446.
- Rondinelli, Dennis A.; Nellis, John R. and Cheema, Shabbir G. (1983). *Decentralization in Developing Countries*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Ruttan, Lore M. (2008). Economic Heterogeneity and the Commons: Effects on Collective Action and Collective Goods Provisioning. *World Development* 36 (5), 969–985.
- Ryabkov, Maxim (2008). The north–south cleavage and political support in Kyrgyzstan. *Central Asian Survey* 27 (3–4), 301–316.
- Sabates-Wheeler, Rachel and Childress, Malcom D. (2004). *Asset-pooling in uncertain times: implications of small-group farming for agricultural restructuring in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Brighton, Sussex.
- SAEPF and UNDP (2007). *Kyrgyzstan. Environment and Natural Resources for Sustainable Development*. Bishkek.
- Saito-Jensen, Moeko; Nathan, Iben and Treue, Thorsten (2010). Beyond elite capture? Community-based natural resource management and power in Mohammed Nagar village, Andhra Pradesh, India. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 327–335.
- Schillhorn van Veen, Tjaart W. (1995). *The Kyrgyz Sheep Herders at a Crossroads*. ODI Pastoral Development Network Series (38).
- Schillhorn van Veen, Tjaart W. (2004). Eastern Europe and the Former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Animal Health Systems in Transition. *Rev. sci. tech. Off. int. Epiz.* 23 (1), 305–318.
- Schlager, Edda and (Blomquist W.) (1998). Heterogeneity and Common Pool Resource Management. In: Loehman, Edna Tusak and Kilgour, D. Marc (eds.) *Designing institutions for environmental and resource management*. Cheltenham, UK, Northampton, MA: E. Elgar, 101–112.
- Schlüter, Achim (2001). *Institutioneller Wandel und Transformation*. Aachen: Shaker.
- Schoch, Nadia; Steimann, Bernd and Thieme, Susan (2010). Migration and Animal Husbandry: Competing or Complementary Livelihood Strategies. Evidence from Kyrgyzstan. *Natural Resources Forum* 34 (3), 211–221.
- Scholz, Fred (1992). *Nomadismus*. Berlin: Das Arabische Buch.
- Schuler, Martin; Dessemonte, Pierre; Torgashova, Ludmilla; Abubakirova, Tleu and Mina-beev, Muktar (2004). *Mountain Atlas of Kyrgyzstan*: NSC Bishkek; EFP Lausanne.
- Schütze, Fritz (1983). Biographieforschung und narratives Interview. *Neue Praxis* 13 (3), 283–293.
- Sehring, Jenniver (2007). Irrigation reform in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. *Irrig Drainage Syst* 21, 277–290.
- Sheppard, Donna J.; Moehrenschrager, Axel; McPherson, Jana M. and Mason, John J. (2010). Ten years of adaptive community-governed conservation: evaluating biodiversity

- protection and poverty alleviation in a West African hippopotamus reserve. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 270–282.
- Shigaeva, Jyldyz; Wolfgramm, Bettina and Dear, Chad (2013). Sustainable Land Management in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. A Research Review. Mountain Societies Research Institutes' Background Papers 2. Bishkek: University of Central Asia
- Shrestha, Krishna K. and McManus, Phil (2007). The Embeddedness of Collective Action in Nepalese Community Forestry. *Small-scale Forestry* 6 (3), 273–290.
- Simon, Herbert A. (1997). *Administrative Behavior*. Macmillan Co: New York.
- Smith, Brian C. (1985). *Decentralization*. London, Boston: G. Allen & Unwin.
- Smith, Lawrence D. (1997). Decentralization and Rural Development. In: FAO Economic and Social Development Department (ed.) *Decentralization and Access to Rural Services (agricultural and social)*. Rome.
- Sproule-Jones, Mark (1993). *Governments at Work*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Steimann, Bernd (2011). *Making a living in uncertainty*. Zurich: University of Zurich
- Steimann, Bernd (2012). Conflicting Strategies for Contested Resources: Pastoralists' Responses to Uncertainty in Post-socialist Rural Kyrgyzstan. In: Kreutzmann, Hermann (ed.) *Pastoral practices in High Asia*: Springer Netherlands, 145–160.
- Steiner-Khamsi, Gita and Stolpe, Ines (2004). Decentralization and Recentralization Reform in Mongolia: Tracing the Swing of the Pendulum. *Comparative Education* 40 (1), 29–53.
- Stoll-Kleemann, S.; de la Vega-Leinert, A. C. and Schultz, L. (2010). The role of community participation in the effectiveness of UNESCO Biosphere Reserve management: evidence and reflections from two parallel global surveys. *Environmental Conservation* 37 (3), 227–238.
- Strauss, Anselm L. and Corbin, Juliet M. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Re-search*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Sunam, R. K. and McCarthy, John F. (2010). Advancing Equity in Community Forestry: Recognition of the Poor Matters. *International Forestry Review* 12 (4), 370–382.
- Teddlie, Charles and Yu, Fen (2007). Mixed methods sampling. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 1 (1), 77–100.
- Theesfeld, Insa (2005). *A common pool resource in transition*. Aachen: Shaker.
- Thomi, Walter (2000). Nationalstaatliche Regulation und Dezentralisierung: Local Government Reform in Ghana. *Welt Trends* 25, 99–120.
- Transparency International (2015). *Corruption Perceptions Index*. URL: <http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>.
- UI Hassan, Mehmood; Starkloff, Ralf and Nizamedinkhodjaeva, Nargiza (2004). *Inadequacies in the Water Reforms in the Kyrgyz Republic: An Institutional Analysis*. Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- UNDP and GKR (2005). *Report on the system of inter-budgetary relations in the Kyrgyz Republic*.
- UNECE (2009). *Environmental performance reviews Kyrgyzstan*. New York, Geneva: United Nations.
- UNEP (2006). *The Kyrgyz Republic. National Report*. Bishkek.
- USAID (2007). *Pasture Reform. Suggestions for Improvements to Pasture Management in the Kyrgyz Republic*.

- von Klobuczynski, Christian Bruno (1999). Sozialwissenschaftliche Forschungsmethoden - das narrative Interview nach Fritz Schütze. München: GrinVerl.
- Wade, Robert (1988). Village Republics. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Wenzel, Bettina (2004). Dörfer im Transformationsprozess Kirgistans. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin.
- Wever, L.; Glaser, M.; Gorris, P. and Ferrol-Schulte, D. (2012). Decentralization and participation in integrated coastal management: Policy lessons from Brazil and Indonesia. *Ocean and Coastal Management* 66 (0), 63–72.
- Williamson, Oliver E. (1999). The Mechanisms of Governance. New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press.
- Wilson, James Q. (1989). Bureaucracy. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Works, Robertson (2002). Overview of Decentralization Worldwide A Stepping Stone to Improved Governance and Human Development. Presentation at the 2nd International Conference on Decentralization. Federalism: The Future of Decentralizing States? Manila, Philippines.
- World Bank (2001). Decentralization in the Transition Economies. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2003). Reaching the Rural Poor. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2004). Kyrgyz Republic Agricultural Policy Update. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2005). Kyrgyz Republic - Village Investments Project. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2007a). Kyrgyz Republic - Livestock Sector Review. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2007b). Kyrgyz Republic. Poverty assessment. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2007c). Project Information Document. Agricultural and Investments Services Project. Concept Stage. Washington, DC
- World Bank (2014). World Development Indicators. URL: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/variableSelection/selectvariables.aspx?source=world-development-indicators>.
- World Organization for Animal Health (2010). Terrestrial Animal Health Code. URL: <http://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=glossaire.htm>.
- Yakubov, Murat (2006). The 2006 follow-up survey of 3 pilot water user associations in the Ferghana Valley. Tashkent.
- Yin, Robert K. (1993). Applications of case study research. Newbury Park, California, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Young, Oran R. (2006). Vertical interplay among scale-dependent environmental and resource regimes. *Ecology and Society* 11 (1).
- Zikos, Dimitrios and Thiel, Andreas (2013). Action Research's Potential to Foster Institutional Change for Urban Water Management. *Water* 5 (2), 356–378.
- Zulu, Leo Charles (2009). Politics of scale and community-based forest management in southern Malawi. *Geoforum* 40 (4), 686–699.

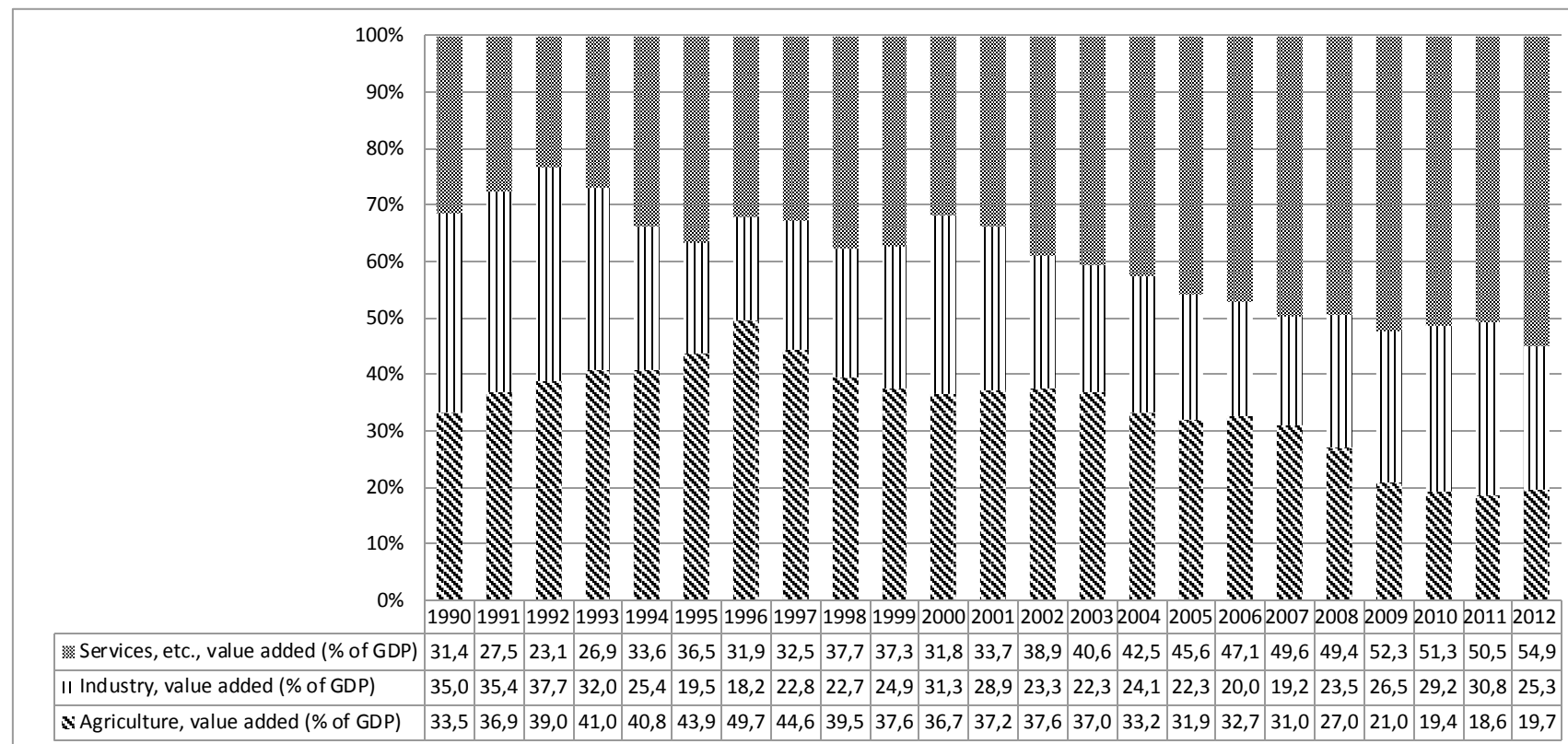


## Annex



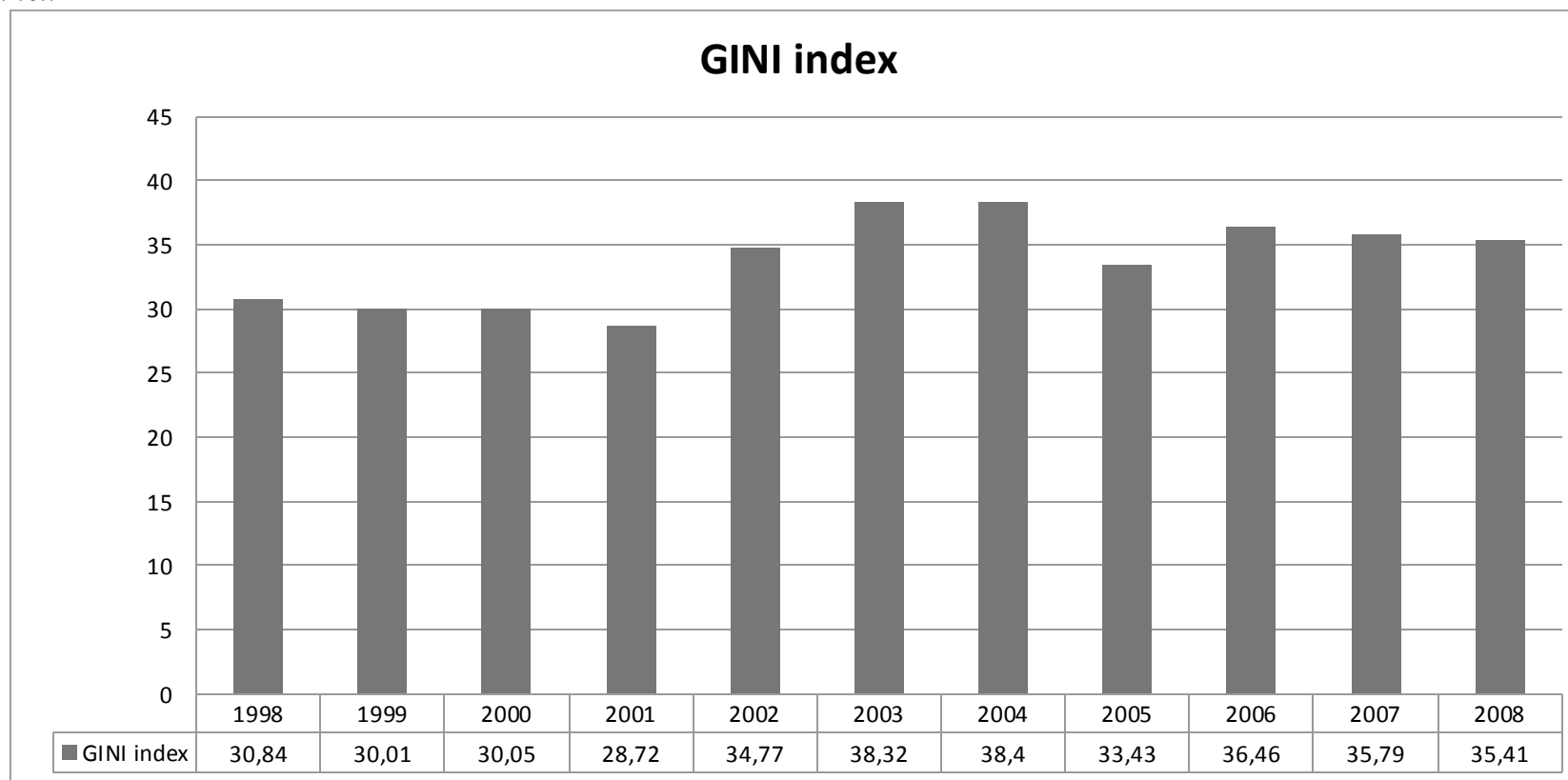
**Figure A-1: Annual GDP growth in % 1990-2012**

Source: World Bank 2014



**Figure A-2: Sectoral contribution to GDP 1990-2012**

Source: World Bank 2014



**Figure A-3: GINI index1990-2010**

Source: World Bank 2014

**Table A-1: List of interview partners**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Location<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Position</b>
02.05.2008	Kadyrbek Kalkanov	Bishkek	M	Head of Department of Interbudgetary Policy of the Ministry of Finance
02.05.2008	Medet Sulatanbaev	Bishkek	M	ARIS
03.05.2008	Baktiyarhan Fattachov	Bishkek	M	State Secretary at the Ministry of Local Self Government and Regional Development
04.05.2008	Topchugul Shadullaeva	Bishkek	F	Editor of the journal “Agro-Press”
04.05.2008	Botol Argynov	Bishkek	M	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry (MAWRPI)
05.05.2008	Klaus Lehrke	Bishkek	M	Deutscher Genossenschafts- und Raiffeisenverband
05.05.2008	Kanyshai Shrashenkova	Bishkek	F	Financial Company for the Support of Credit Unions, Head
06.05.2008	Tatiana Vedeneva	Bishkek	F	Public relations officer of NGO Legal Advise to Rural Citizens (LARC)
06.05.2008	Almas Musabaev	Bishkek	M	Head of NGO Legal Advise to Rural Citizens (LARC)
10.05.2008	Elisabeth Kaatz and	Bishkek	F	NGO Hevetas‘ Rural Advisory Service

<sup>1</sup> I am bound to a confidentiality agreement with all municipality-level respondents and non-supervisory staff members of organizations. The names of those respondents are therefore not published in this table.

<sup>2</sup> I have, as promised to the respondents at municipality-level, changed the names of the case study municipalities in order to protect the anonymity of the office holders I interviewed.

Danial Tillaev				
10.05.2008	Aynura N.	Bishkek	F	NGO RDS Elet
11.05.2008	Tim Stevenson	Bishkek	M	NGO Winrock international — Central Asian Initiative
11.05.2008	Kedar Dabke	Bishkek	M	Ak Chardak (Agricultural input trading company)
12.05.2008	Ulan Kasymov	Bishkek	M	Camp Ala Too
13.05.2008	Guljan Suiunalieva	Bishkek	F	JICA
13.05.2008	Gulnura Muratova	Bishkek	F	GTZ [Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit]
13.06.2008	Inam-ur-Rahin	Bishkek	M	Researcher
16.05.2008	Nazgul Nurjanova	Bishkek	F	NGO Helvetas, Local Market Development project
16.05.2008	Damira Sulpieva	Bishkek	F	Coordinator of UNDP Local Self Governance and Decentralization Programme
17.06.2008	Tilek Ashymov	Bishkek	M	Deutscher Genossenschafts- und Raiffeisenverband
08.06.2008	Rita Kaldasheva	Thon	F	Secretary of district (rayon) Kenesh in Thong
19.06.2008	████████	Ala Too	M	Secretary of municipality administration
10.06.2008	████████████████	Ala Too	F	Social worker
20.06.2008	██████████████	Ala Too	M	Para-veterinarian
21.06.2008	██████████████████	Ala Too	F	Rapid Rural Appraisal/Group interview
21.06.2008	██████	Ala Too	M	Murab (Irrigation manager)
22.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Mother of land specialis (Timur Gasetov)

22.06.2008	██████████ ██████	Ala Too	M	Poor family
22.06.2008	██████████ ██████	Ala Too	F/M	Livestock owners
22.06.2008	██████ ██████	Ala Too	M	Head of drinking water user association
22.06.2008	██████	Ala Too	F	Accountant of drinking water user association
23.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	M	Head of municipality administration
23.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	M	Part-time gold mine worker, farmer
23.06.2008	██████	Ala Too	F	Credit holder, mother of craft workshop owner
23.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Farmer and livestock owner
24.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Farmer and livestock owner
25.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F/M	Host family B, Farmer and livestock owner
25.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner
25.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	M	Elderly livestock owner
25.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	M	Extremely poor man and his friend
25.06.2008	██████████ ██████	Ala Too	F/M	Animal owners
25.06.2008	██████	Ala Too	F	Social worker; accountant of ARIS Territorial Investments Committee (TIC)
26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner

26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner
26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner
26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner
26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner
26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner
26.06.2008	██████████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner
26.06.2008	██████	Ala Too		Livestock owner and farmer
27.06.2008	Ermek Baibagyshev	Naryn	M	State University of Naryn
28.06.2008	Balbaev Bakyt Useinovich	Naryn	M	Regional Manager Rural Advisory Service in Naryn
28.06.2008	Temirlan	Naryn	M	Representative of UNDP Poverty Eradication Program Naryn
28.06.2008	Aigul Abdyldaeva	Naryn	F	Aga Khan Foundation
28.06.2008	Kubanych Tagaev	Naryn	M	Head of UNDP Democratic Governance Program
29.06.2008	Murzabek Kulukeev	At Bashy	M	Coordinator Municipal Resource Centre in At Bashy
30.06.2008	Süjunbek Jolboldiev	Bulak	M	Head of Bulak municipality administration
30.06.2008	Nassyr Djusupov	At Bashy	M	Regional manager of Rural Advisory service in At Bashy
30.06.2008	██████████████████	Bulak	F	Nurse
01.07.2008	██████████████████	Bulak	M	Secretary of municipality administration
02.07.2008	██████████████████	Bulak	M	Social worker

02.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F/M	Rapid Rural Appraisal / Group interview 1
04.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F/M	Rapid Rural Appraisal/ Group interview 2
04.07.2008	██████████████	Bulak	M	Financial officer
04.07.2008	██████████████	Bulak	M	Land expert
02.07.2008	██████████████	Bulak	M	Veterinarian
05.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F	Poor women
05.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F	Self-help group member
06.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F	Teacher
03.07.2008	Representatives of different AOs	Naryn	M/F	Regional workshop of National Academy of Science
07.07.2008	██████	Bulak	M	Hunter
08.07.2008	██████████████	Bulak	M	Mechanic
08.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F	Tractor owner
08.07.2008	██████████████	Bulak	F	Livestock owner and farmer
09.07.2008	████████	Bulak	M	Livestock owner and farmer, lorry owner
09.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F	Livestock owner and farmer
09.07.2008	██████	Bulak	F	Former local contact of Rural Advisory Service (RAS)
09.07.2008	██████████	Bulak	F	Pensioner
14.07.2008	Sharabidin Tairov	Osh	M	UNDP Democratic governance programme
14.07.2008	Ainagul Nasyrova	Osh	F/M	TES centre manager in Osh



15.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Kyzyl Suu deputy head
15.07.2008	██████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer
16.07.2008	██████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Director of School
16.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	F/M	Rapid Rural Appraisal/ Group interview 1
16.07.2008	████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Livestock owner and farmer
17.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Rapid Rural Appraisal/ Group interview 2
17.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Agricultural Cooperative “Aicenem” member
17.07.2008	██████████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Machinery cooperative member, ARIS-TIC member, Aiyl kenesh member
17.07.2008	██████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Credit group member
18.07.2008	██████████	Kara Suu	M	RAS Kara Suu, Livestock expert
18.07.2008	██████████████	Kara Suu	M	LARC Kara Suu Lawyer
20.07.2008	██████████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Veterinarian
20.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer
20.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer
20.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Trader
20.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Farmer
21.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Farmer
21.07.2008	██████████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Head of Kyzyl Suu municipality
21.07.2008	██████████████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer

21.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	M	Farmer and livestock owner
21.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer, widow
21.07.2008	██████████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer
21.07.2008	██████	Kyzyl Suu	F	Farmer
21.07.2008	Ismail Tashbekov	Bolshevik	M	Head of state seed breeding station in Kara Suu
22.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	F	Financial expert at Bolshevik municipality
22.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Land expert at Bolshevik municipality
22.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	F	Social worker at Bolshevik municipality
22.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Head of Bolshevik municipality
22.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Veterinarian
23.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Farmer and livestock owner
23.07.2008	████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████ ██████████	Bolshevik	M/F	Rapid Rural Appraisal/ Group interview 1
23.07.2008	████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████	Bolshevik	M/F	Rapid Rural Appraisal/ Group interview 2
23.07.2008	████████████████████	Bolshevik	F	Farmer
24.07.2008	██████	Bolshevik	M	Farmer and livestock owner, Sauna owner

25.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	F	Farmer and livestock owner
25.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Drinking water association
25.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Irrigation water user association
25.07.2008	██████	Bolshevik	F	Farmer and livestock owner
25.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	M	Farmer and livestock owner
25.07.2008	██████	Bolshevik	M	Farmer and livestock owner
25.07.2008	██████████	Bolshevik	F	Farmer and livestock owner
26.07.2008	██████████	Papan	M	Head of municipality Papan
28.07.2008	Taalaigul Sharsh-embieva	Bishkek	F	NGO RDS Elet
28.07.2008	Ulanbek Duishenaliev	Bishkek	M	Association of Municipalities of Kyrgyz Republic
29.07.2008	Clare Romanik	Bishkek	F	NGO USAID - Urban Institute
28.07.2009	Anton van Engelen	Bishkek	M	World Bank
01.08.2009	Ulan Kasymov	Bishkek	M	NGO CAMP Alatoo
03.08.2009	Asambek Aliev	Alamidin	M	Head of Alamidin municipality, former Veterinarian
03.08.2009	Nurlan Atakanov	Bishkek	M	Coordinator of UNDP Poverty Reduction Programme
05.08.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Agricultural specialist in municipality Ala Too
05.08.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Small-scale livestock owner

05.08.2009	████████	Ala Too	M	Large-scale livestock owner
05.08.2009	██████████████	Ala Too	M	Small livestock owner
05.08.2009	████████	Ala Too	M	Head of municipality Ala Too
06.08.2009	██████████████	Ala Too	M	Para-veterinarian
06.08.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Accountant and agricultural specialis at Ala Too municipality
06.08.2009	██████	Ala Too	F	Member of municipality council (Aiyl kenesh)
06.08.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Small-scale livestock owner
07.08.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Dairy cow herding group coordinator
07.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Land specialist of Ala Too municipality
07.09.2009	██████████████	Ala Too	M	Para-veterinarian
07.08.2009	██████	Thon	M	Representative of District (Rayon) Veterinary Department in Thon
07.08.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Para-veterinarian
07.08.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Member of the elderly council
08.08.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner and farmer
13.08.2009	Anton van Engelen	Bishkek	M	Veterinary Expert at the World Bank in Kyrgyz Republic
17.08.2009	Hugh Coulter	Bishkek	F	Veterinary Expert with the Delegation of the European Union, Commission in Kyrgyz Republic

18.08.2009	Ute Fischer and Ulan Kasymov	Bishkek	M/F	CAMP Alatoo
18.08.2009	Olaf Heidelberg	Bishkek	M	Delegation of the European Union, Commission in Kyrgyz Republic
18.08.2009	Hugh Coulter	Bishkek	M	Delegation of the European Union, Commission in Kyrgyz Republic
18.08.2009	Stephen J. Newton	Bishkek	M	European Commission in Kyrgyz Republic Project “Support to Civil Service Reform in Kyrgyz Republic”
19.08.2009	Baktiyarhan Fattachov	Bishkek	M	Ministry of Local Self Government and Regional Development
25.08.2009	██████████	Bishkek	M	Private Veterinarian
25.08.2009	██████████	Near Ming Bulak	M	Private Veterinarian
26.08.2009	██████	Ming Bulak	M	Participation in Veterinary Workshop in study municipality organized by NGO
30.08.2009	Anonymous	At Bashy	M	MAWRPI at the At Bashy District (Rayon) Administration
30.08.2009	Anonymous	At Bashy	M	Rayon Agricultural Department at At Bashy District (Rayon)
01.09.2009	Alybek Matanbekov	At Bashy	M	Rayon Chief Veterinary in At Bashy District (Rayon) Veterinary Diagnostic Center
02.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Land expert of Bulak municipality
03.09.2009	Sabad Talipov	At Bashy	M	Bacteriological Department of the At Bashy District (Rayon) Veterinary Diagnostic Center

03.09.2009	Anonymous	At Bashy	M	Kyrgyz State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property, At Bashy office
03.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Bulak municipality land expert
04.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Head of Bulak private veterinary service
04.09.2009	██████	Bulak	F	Widow small-scale livestock owner
04.09.2009	██████	Bulak	M	Former herdsman, now pensioner
10.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owners and farmers
10.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Former head of Ala Too municipality, shop owner
10.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Herder
10.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	F	Teacher
11.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Ex head of Ala Too municipality, shop owner
11.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Head of Ala Too municipality
11.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Poor herder
11.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	F	Large-scale livestock owner, stable owner
11.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	F	Municipality council (Aiyl kenesh) member, Pasture Committee member
12.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Pensioner, herdsman
12.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Veteran, pensioner, herdsman
12.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	F	Large-scale livestock owner, stable owner
12.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M/ F	Livestock owner, stable owner

13.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner, stable owner
13.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner
13.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	F	Small-scale livestock owner, widow
14.09.2009	██████	Ala Too	M	Former head of municipality Ala Too, shop owner
18.09.2009	Mamatkalil Razaev	Bishkek	M	Advisor to the Director of the National Agency of the Kyrgyz Republic on Local Self-governance Affairs
22.09.2009	Mairambek Taírov	Bishkek	M	Agricultural Investments and Services Project Coordinator
22.09.2009	Zahaifa Omorbekova	Bishkek	F	Director Agricultural Projects Implementation Unit at the MAWRPI of the Kyrgyz Republic (MAWRPI)
25.09.2009	Süjünduk Abkirovich	At Bashy	M	Head of the At Bashy office of Kyrgyz State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property
25.09.2009	Satarov Taalaibek	At Bashy	M	ARIS, At Bashy coordinator
26.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Head of Bulak municipality
26.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Chairman of Pasture Committee
27.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Father of host family
27.09.2009	██████	Bulak	M	Ex-veterinarian in Bulak Kolkhkoz
27.09.2009	██████	Bulak	F	Herder
27.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Shop owner, municipality council (aiyl kenesh) member
27.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Secretary of Pasture Committee
28.09.2009	██████	Bulak	F	Livestock owner

28.09.2009	██████	Bulak	M	Livestock owner
28.09.2009	██████	Bulak	M	Livestock owner
28.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	F	Small-scale livestock owner
28.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Small-scale livestock owner
28.09.2009	██████	Bulak	F	Livestock owner
28.09.2009	██████████████	Bulak	F	Poor women
28.09.2009	██████████████ ██████████████	Bulak	F	Livestock owners and farmers
28.09.2009	██████████████ ██████	Bulak	F/M	Livestock owners and farmers
28.09.2009	██████████████ ██████	Bulak	F	Livestock owner and farmer
30.09.2009	██████	Bulak	M	Large-scale livestock owner
30.09.2009	██████	Bulak	M	Small-scale livestock owner, Pasture Committee member
30.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	F	Small-scale livestock owner (widow)
30.09.2009	██████████	Bulak	F	Small-scale livestock owner
01.10.2009	██████████	Bulak	F	Large-scale livestock owner and farmer
01.10.2009	██████████████	Bulak	M	Large-scale livestock owner and farmer
01.10.2009	██████████████	Bulak	M	Pasture committee member
01.10.2009	██████████████	Bulak	F	Livestock owner and farmer



02.10.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Accountant in municipality Bulak
02.10.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Elderly herder
02.10.2009	██████████	Bulak	M	Livestock owner and farmer
02.10.2009	██████████	At Bashy	F	<i>Leskhoz</i> in At Bashy
03.10.2009	██████████	Naryn	M	Representative of ARIS in Naryn
03.10.2009	██████████	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, large-scale livestock owner, municipality council (Aiyl kenesh) member
03.10.2009	████	Kara Tash	M	Livestock owner, herder
03.10.2009	██████	Kara Tash	M	Livestock owner and farmer
03.10.2009	██████	Kara Tash	F	Livestock owner and farmer
03.10.2009	██████████	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, large-scale livestock owner, municipality council (Aiyl kenesh) member
04.10.2009	██████	Ming Bulak	M	Head of Ming Bulak municipality administration
04.10.2009	██████████	Ming Bulak	M	Agricultural Expert in Ming Bulak municipality
04.10.2009	██████████	Kara Tash	M	Livestock owner and farmer
04.10.2009	██████████	Kara Tash	F	Herder
04.10.2009	██████	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, small—scale livestock owner
05.10.2009	██████	Kara Tash	F	Small-scale livestock owner and farmer

05.10.2009	■■■■	Kara Tash	F	Livestock owner and farmer
05.10.2009	■■■■■■■■■■	Kara Tash	M	Large-scale livestock owner and farmer
05.10.2009	■■■■■	Kara Tash	F	Large-scale livestock owner and farmer
06.10.2009	■■■■■■■■■■	Kara Tash	M	Large-scale livestock owner and farmer
06.10.2009	■■■■■■■	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, large-scale livestock owner
06.10.2009	■■■■■■■	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, large-scale livestock owner
07.10.2009	■■■■■■■	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, large-scale livestock owner and farmer, municipality council (Aiyl kenesh) member
07.10.2009	■■■■■■■■	Kara Tash	M	Pasture committee member, large-scale livestock owner and farmer, municipality council (Aiyl kenesh) member
09.10.2009	■■■■■■■■	Thon	M	ARIS in Thon
10.10.2009	■■■■■■■	Ala Too	M	Zootechnician
10.10.2009	■■■■■■■■■■	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer
10.10.2009	■■■■	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer
10.10.2009	■■■■	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer, stable owner
10.11.2009	■■■■■	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer, stable owner
10.11.2009	■■■■■■■	Ala Too	M	Agricultural specialist in municipality Ala Too
12.10.2009	■■■■■■■■■■■■	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner and farmer
12.10.2009	■■■■■■■	Ala Too	F	Large-scale livestock owner and farmer
12.10.2009	■■■■■■■	Ala Too	F	Lady who invests in animal breeding

12.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer
12.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer
12.10.2009	██████	Ala Too	F	Teacher in Ala Too
13.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner and farmer
13.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Brother of former head of municipality administration (Aiyl okmotu); livestock owner
13.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner and farmer
13.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner, construction worker
14.10.2009	Karybek Takyrbashev	Thon	M	Head of District (Rayon) Veterinary Department in Thon
14.10.2009	Süiünduk Abakirovich	Thon	M	Head of the Thon office of Kyrgyz State Agency for Registration of Rights for Immovable Property
15.10.2009	Ainura Rachimova	Bokonbaeva	F	NGO Shoola in Bokonbaeva
16.10.2009	██████████	Ala Too	M	Livestock owner and farmer; taxi driver
17.12.2009	Gulzat Namatbekova	Bishkek	F	Senior Lawyer USAID/Chemonics
17.12.2009	Ulan Kasymov	Bishkek	M	Camp Ala Too
10.09.2009	██████████	Ala Too	F	Livestock owner and farmer, stable owner in Torgus Bulak
02.10.2009	██████	Bulak	F	Host family member

## EKLÄRUNG

Ich erkläre an Eides statt, dass ich die vorgelegte Arbeit selbständig und ohne unerlaubte Hilfe verfasst und andere als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel nicht benutzt habe.

Wibke Crewett